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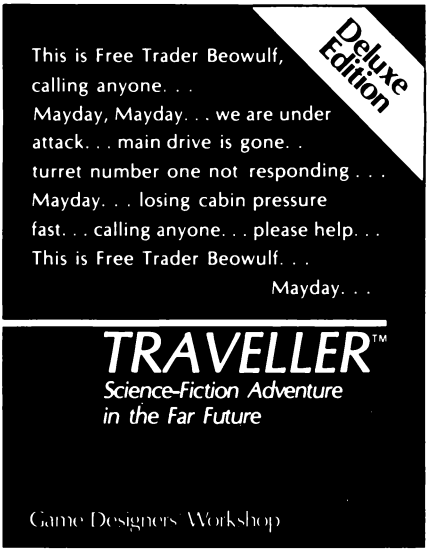
the JOURNAL of the Travellers' Aid Society

Deluxe Traveller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JOURNAL

of the Travellers' Aid Society

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Dates in this issue of the *Journal* are given in accordance with an arbitrary Imperial calendar of 365 days. The expression of date consists of a three-digit day number (showing the current day of the year) followed by a dash and a four-digit year number (showing the current year since the founding of the Imperium).

The date of this issue is **273-1107** or the **273rd** day of the **1107th** year of the Imperium.

The *Journal of the Travellers' Aid Society* is a science-fiction gaming magazine dedicated to Traveller, GDW's role-playing game set in the far future.

Editor: Loren K. Wiseman
Spiritual Advisor: Marc W. Miller
Publisher: Game Designers' Workshop
Artists in this issue: William H. Keith— pages 6-11, 16, 18, 36, 38; Liz Danforth— pages 13, 40; D. J. Barr— page 41; David Heath— page 24; John Morrison— page 20.

WINNER— H. G. WELLS AWARD: BEST MAGAZINE COVERING ROLE-PLAYING, 1980

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Advertisers should inquire for an advertising rate card.

Submissions: We welcome articles and illustrations for the *Journal.* Please inquire before submitting manuscripts, enclosing a stamped, self-addressed envelope; we will send manuscript guideline and format sheets.

From the Management

The summer convention season is over once again, and things can finally start returning to their normal state. The *Journal* came out of it all with an award, the H. G. Wells award for best magazine covering role-playing and the Workshop as a whole garnered several more (see the details on page 33. This is the second year the *Journal* has receieved this particular award, and all of here concerned with the magazine would like to extend our thanks to the subscribers and to the members of the Academy of Adventure Gaming Arts and Design.

The two most commonly asked questions, both at conventions and in my mail, are 1) How do I go about submitting an article to the *Journal?* and 2) What kind of articles are you looking for? I'd like to take a little space here to answer these, and deal with a few other aspects of writing for the *Journal.*

First, I appreciate getting an inquiry before you write a major article. We here at the Workshop are working on a lot of things, and if we do an article on a topic we naturally give that article priority over outside submissions. A letter asking if the *Journal* is interested may save you a lot of work. The manuscript guideline and format sheets (which are mentioned under the publication data on the table of contents) are free to anyone who sends a stamped self-addressed envelope. These sheets outline what your manuscript should look like (typed, double-spaced, on 8½ x 11" paper, and so on). I send these out because my time is limited, and I can't afford to waste any trying to read someone's handwriting, or trying to read an eight foot manuscript typed single spaced, with a fading ribbon, on a roll of butcher paper.

If have an idea for an Amber Zone, or one of the other regular features such as Ship's Locker or Bestiary, don't bother inquiring first, send it in.

Second, as to what kind of articles I am interested in, I usually say I will look at anything. This is not strictly true. I am not interested in fiction. We cannot compete with such SF magazines as *Analog* or *Asimov's SF,* nor do we wish to do so. I am not interested in seeing material that is almost an exact duplicate of something we published last issue, with a few names changed. Study the material we have already published for style and format, but do not take ideas from it. Your material should be fresh, interesting, something you think other **Traveller** players and referees would be interested in seeing. I am not interested in looking at major rules changes (those are reserved for us) or articles telling how to take parts of **Traveller** and three other role-playing games, and produce a hybrid. A good way to start, if you don't have any ideas initially, is to ask yourself 'What is the biggest

problem a **Traveller** player or referee faces, and how would I solve it?' Try an article describing some piece of equipment in detail, such as John Colbert did with vacc suits. How about a new and different way for characters to get money? Examine some aspect of society or technology in more detail than the rules do, or that they don't cover, such as I did with robots, or as Marc did with computer programming.

If you've never written for a magazine before, don't be nervous. The worst that will happen is that your article will be sent back, and you'll be told to try again. Don't be discouraged, but keep trying. If your ideas are good, eventually they will see print.

A final word: always include a stamped, self-addressed envelope with the proper postage with your manuscript guidelines request or article submission. I cannot return your article or send you the sheets unless you do me this small courtesy.

Sometimes it seems you can't win, no matter what. Two articles in the last issue had portions omitted or scrambled. In the *Care and Feeding of NPCs* article, page 22, column 2, the first four lines should read ". . . body, and mouth. It is far more creative to subtly steer a group using the actions, inactions, or advice of a handy NPC, rather than handling everything by way . . .". In the same article, page 23, the first three lines of the first column should read "Regardless of where you come up with your NPC, though, bear in mind that there is more to an NPC than just statistics and skills." The last line of page 22 should read ". . . controlled characters are going to be used."

In the *Vacc Suits* article, several sentences were left out. Beginning page 48, column 1, paragraph 1, line 6 should read "Suiting up normally takes 12 minutes, but this can be cut to 3 if sanitary connections and safety checks are not made. The suit may be removed in about 6 minutes normally, or in about 2 minutes under emergency conditions.

Donning a Hard Torso or a Hard suit is somewhat easier. These types are equipped with a rotary coupling which allows the suit to be separated into two parts. The user steps into the lower half of the suit and connects the sanitary arrangements. Next the user slips into the upper half of the suit (which already has the PLSS pack plugged in and which is locked in place into a wall mounted frame). The user seals the waist coupling, checks the PLSS for proper functions, and dons the helmet and gloves. Total time spent is about 8 minutes, but this can be cut to 2 under emergency conditions. The suit may be removed in about 4 minutes normally, or in about 1 minute under emergency conditions. The wall frame that holds the upper portion of the suit is not required to don or remove the suit, but donning and removal times are increased by 25% without it."

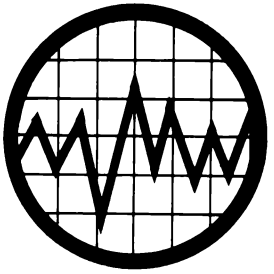
We apologize to any readers who were inconvenienced by these mistakes.

— Loren K. Wiseman

Traveller is available overseas through GDW distributors in the UK and Australia.

United Kingdom: Traveller (and its additional booklets, adventures and supplements) is printed under license from GDW by Games Workshop, 1 Dalling Rd, Hammersmith, London, W6.

Australia: Traveller is imported and distributed by Jedko Games, 18 Fonceca St, Mordialloc, Vic.



JUST DETECTED

Games:

Star Viking

A game of interstellar raiding and plunder for two players. The maps show 24 star systems; counters show raiding and defending ships of various sizes, plus other forces. Not a **Traveller** game, but adaptable with a little effort.

154 counters, twelve 3½x4"maps, rules, charts, in a box. $4.98.

Design: Arnold Hendricks

Publisher: Heritage USA, 9840 Monroe Dr, Bldg 116, Dallas, TX, 75220.

Play Aids:

Fleetwatch

One of three new folio adventures from Marischal. A group of characters are assigned the task of rescuing the crew of an endangered base in the Choleosti system. The adventure contains all the information a referee needs to start playing: maps, encounter tables, Ref's notes, etc. Approved for use with **Traveller.**

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Flight of the Stag

The players, as personnel attached to the close escort vessel Stag, must make their way across several parsecs of hostile Zhodani controlled space to carry a very important passenger to safety. All information a referee needs to begin play is included. Approved for use with **Traveller.**

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Salvage Mission

The players, as personnel of the Stag, are charged with the recovery of an Imperial fleet payroll from a wrecked vessel. The situation is complicated by the fact that the wreck is not located inside the Imperium, and the political situation is very delicate. All information a referee needs to start playing is included. Approved for use with **Traveller.**

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Design: Dave Sering

Publisher: Judges Guild, RR 8, Box 9, 1221 N. Sunnyside, Decatur, IL, 62522.

Navigators Starcharts

A 112 page mapping aid, with space for 96 subsectors, each with a separate map grid and planetary data blanks.

8½x11" book and large map. $4.98.

continued on page 34

TRAVELLER NEWS SERVICE

RHYLANOR/RHYLANOR (0306-A434934-F) **Date 206-1107**

¶ The local branch of the IISS detached duty office issued orders today requiring all detached scout personnel in the Spinward Marches and Corridor subsectors controlling surplus scout vessels and all other retired scout personnel under the age of 66 to report to the nearest scout base for examination.

¶ All scout vessels will be armed and re-fitted for service in scout squadrons attached to the navy. All retired personnel in suitable physical condition will be inducted into service for the duration of the emergency in accordance with established procedures.

¶ Failure to report for examination during a state of emergency is treason, and a maximum sentence of death may be exacted upon conviction. Ω

RHYLANOR/RHYLANOR (0306-A434934-F) **Date 210-1107**

¶ The Travellers' Aid Society announced today that, contrary to rumor, all representatives of the Regina branch of the Journal of the Travellers' Aid Society are safe.

¶ "All but a skeleton news-gathering staff has been withdrawn from the system as a safety measure," a society spokesman said, "but we will continue full coverage of the war as it develops." Ω

REGINA/REGINA (0310-A788899-A) **Date: 212-1107**

¶ The office of the Duke today announced that his Grace Norris, Duke of Regina, has been stricken with a variant form of pneumonic virus and has transferred the routine functions of state to a nominee pending his recovery. The brief statement by the Duke's seneschal was made during the regularly scheduled news conference, and no questions were permitted.

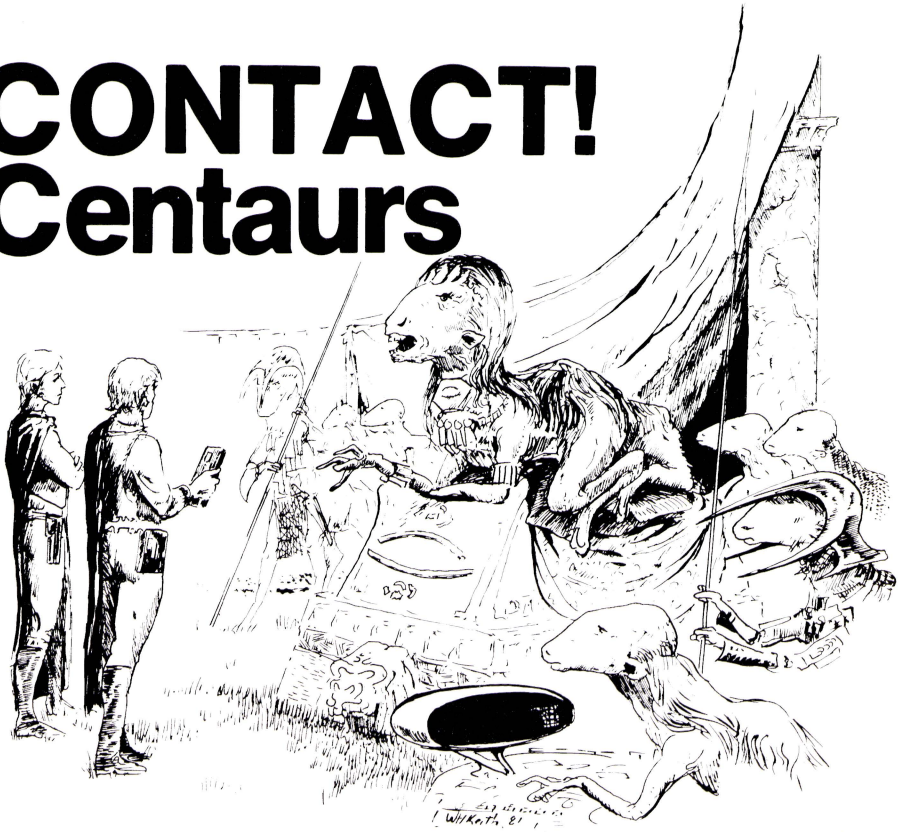
¶ Speculation that the Duke has been deposed by rival power factions within the navy is reported unfounded. Ω

REGINA/REGINA (0310-A788899-A) **Date: 214-1107**

¶ Strong Zhodani advances on Louzy and Efate are reported to have been beaten back by Imperial naval forces late last month. Conflicting reports have prompted the Admiralty to institute a policy of monitoring news releases and rating their accuracy. The rating for these reports was termed excellent. Ω

Traveller News Service is another Imperium-wide benefit of membership in the *Travellers' Aid Society.*

CONTACT! Centaurs



The Centaurs (they call themselves *K'kree)* are among the most massive of the major races and are the only example of a major race to be descended from herbivores. An adult Centaur stands about 1.5 meters at the shoulder and between 2.0 and 2.4 meters tall when standing erect. Weight averages 550 kilograms. They are bilaterally symmetrical, hexapedal, and homeothermic. They bear some resemblance to the centaurs of ancient Terran myth, a trait noted by the earliest explorers. There are two sexes.

The K'kree words *T't'tkahk Xeng Kirr* are usually translated literally as "2000 Worlds". The same words can be rendered idiomatically as universe, and as the name of the K'kree empire. In times past, the words meant night sky, as roughly 2000 stars can be seen from one hemisphere of the K'kree homeworld.

The arrangement of the manipulative organ (or hand) on the fore-limb is one of their most interesting features. A complex arrangement of solid bone, ligaments, and cartilaginous tubes permit the fingers of the Centaur hand to telescope up out of the way when the hand is used as a weapon. Fully extended, the fingers are mutually opposable to each other and to the "thumb" which is in reality an extension of the ulna. A Centaur hand is very flexible but somewhat weaker in grasping power than a human hand.

Centaurs are covered with short gray or black fur, with a dense black mane covering the head, neck, and upper back of both sexes. A large fatty hump along the back protects the spine at the crucial juncture between upper and lower torsos. The circulatory system has two hearts but is otherwise similar to that of Terran mammals.

Unlike Terran mammals, the young are fed partially-digested regurgitated food instead of milk. Males average 15 to 20% larger than females.

Their eyesight is equal to human in most respects. The K'kree cannot see as far into the red portion of the spectrum as humans but are capable of picking up more ultra-violet. They are able to see colors in rocks and plants which humans cannot, and find variation and beauty in materials which humans see as mono-colored. Their hearing is very acute.

Smell is the sharpest of the K'kree senses. Their works of art concentrate upon olfactory rather than visual or auditory elements (although these are often present). Perfumery is as valid an art form for them as sculpture and music are to humans. K'kree differentiate other beings by scent more than by sight or sound, and can detect the approach of enemies at considerable distance. A K'kree with experience in dealing with humans (and other races) can detect certain basic emotions (fear, sexual desire, anger, etc.) from their smell. Due to their sensitive noses they are uncomfortable on worlds with tainted atmospheres, even with filter masks, but this does not prevent them from operating on such worlds.

Centaurs are extremely conservative in all aspects of their culture. Ceremonial military units (such as bodyguards) are armed with equipment which K'kree military technology outdated centuries ago, and (aside from modifications made necessary by the discovery of spaceflight) K'kree government has not changed significantly in centuries.

Because of their plains origins, the Centaurs are claustrophobes; they cannot stand to be enclosed. Centaur cities are clumps of low, broad, transparent domes, the buildings inside being never more than one story in height and open to the sky. Partitions inside buildings are achieved with curtains or tapestries. Through training and discipline, some individuals (AFV crews, starship pilots, and so on) are able to overcome this phobia.

Centaurs are extremely gregarious. They are rarely (if ever) found alone, and will quickly sicken and die if removed from other K'kree for any length of time. A lone K'kree is either deathly ill, and has been exiled by the herd to die, or is dangerously insane. Receiving a trade or diplomatic delegation from the centaurs means entertaining the entire family (one or more wives, servants, scribes, assistants, etc) of the merchant or the ambassador. The K'kree word for "my" refers to a possession of an individual's herd or family, not to that of an individual. Privacy and individuality are exotic and little understood concepts for the K'kree.

SOCIETY

Centaur society is divided into castes. The system is a remnant of ancient times

which no longer fits Centaur culture perfectly, but the K'kree stick with it because it is traditional.

There are hundreds of castes, but the distinctions between them are too faint for non-K'kree to understand. For simplicity, castes can be divided into three general groupings: noble, merchant, and servant. It is possible for a family to rise in caste, but this is a rare occurrance.

The lowest caste, the *servants,* has come to include farmers, factory workers, and unskilled laborers as well as servants for all castes. Servants shave their manes completely as a token of submission.

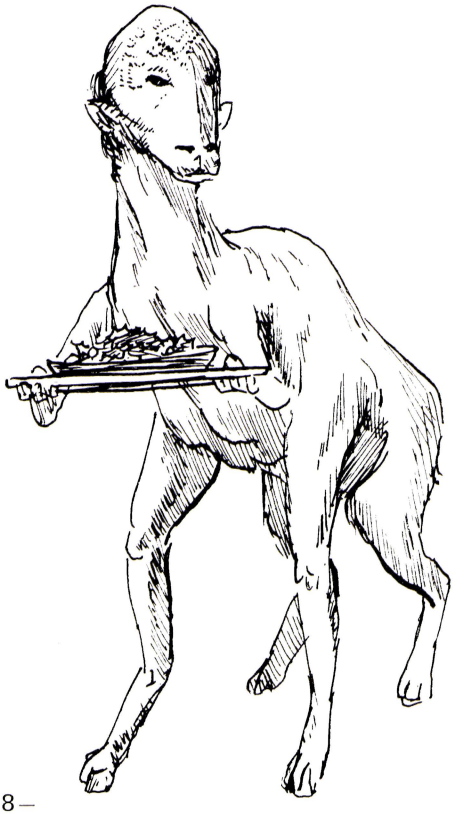
The next higher caste, the *merchants,* includes most skilled workers, scientists, engineers and technicians, scribes, and government administrators, as well as merchants and businessmen. Merchants shave only the top of the skull as a mark of submission.

Nobles, the highest caste, are the governmental officials (the krurruna and others), the high military officers, diplomats, and heads of trade and manufacturing concerns. Nobles are allowed to wear the full mane as a mark of distinction, and are usually garbed in a much more ornate fashion than the lower castes.

Warriors provide the Centaurs with soldiers, police, fire-fighters, and body-guards for diplomatic and merchantile expeditions. Every male K'kree must serve a term in the military upon coming of age. Warriors are drawn from all castes, rank in the military being determined by the caste of origin (nobles enter the service as general officer trainees, merchants as lower officers and noncoms, etc). Upon completing the required term of service, a warrior returns to his original caste and position. Warriors are the only Centaurs permitted to bear weapons, and are further distinguished by their peculiar flared and horned helmets.

Female K'kree are casteless, taking on the caste of their father or husband. Females have no position in government or society other than the rearing of young. Females (except servants) wear the mane partially shaved and braided in a fashion that varies from caste to caste.

The K'kree are vegetarians, and (understandably) have an instinctive hatred of meat-eating creatures. The K'kree are very uneasy anywhere their sensitive noses detect the smell of cooking meat, any place where meat has been cooked recently, or in the presence



servant

of anyone who has eaten meat within the last two or three days (they smell it on the body oils and breath).

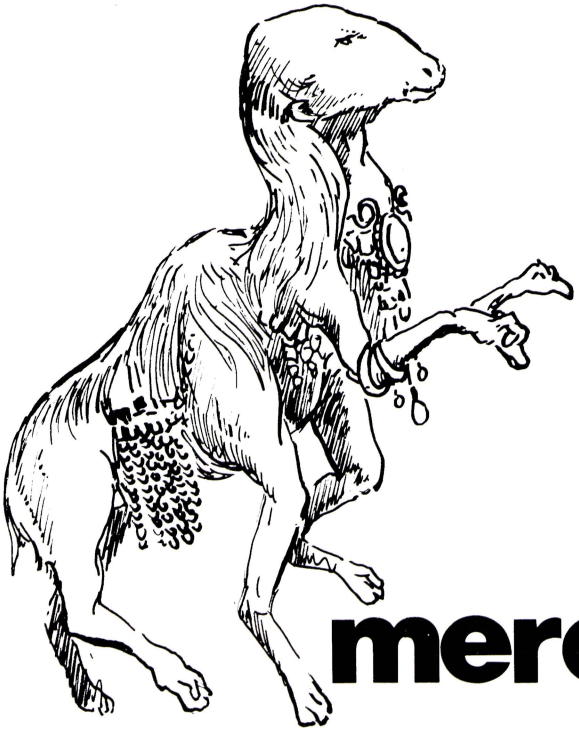
GOVERNMENT

The basis of Centaur government is rooted in the traditional herd system. The basic unit of government is the herd, consisting of thousands of individuals of all sexes, castes and ages, led by *krurruna* (literally: bosses) under a single *Ghik'keer!k* (steppelord). Families are the smallest social unit, consisting of a patriarch or family leader, his wife or wives and their sons (either those too young for service as warriors or those who have completed such service), unmarried daughters, any technicians, scribes, or other assistants the leader may require to fulfill his family's position in society, servants, and warriors. The word "family" does not mean the same thing for the K'kree as it does for humans. In K'kree society, a family is not a set of parents and children, indeed, most of the members of a K'ree family will not be related. A patriarch's assistants, warriors and servants are just as much members of the family as the patriarch's wife and children. A family will fulfill a specific function in society, and this function will usually change very slowly (over generations) if at all. It is possible for individuals in a family to have families of their own, which can consist of families, and so on.

In recent times, most herds have been assigned specific geographic areas (several may be assigned to a city, or a single herd may be assigned millions of hectares of farmland). A number of herds are governed by a single "lord of steppelords" (usually the ruler of a planet) and the Centaur race as a whole is ruled by a "Steppelord of the 2000 Worlds".

REFEREEING CENTAURS

Character Generation: Because of the complexities of their society, Centaur characters cannot be generated using the normal system. It is strongly recommended that referees use Centaurs only as non-player characters until a suitable character generation system can be published. When a family is encountered in the course of business, it is not necessary for the whole family to be met. An interview with the K'kree consul to a particular world will mean meeting the consul, his scribes, and one one or two assistants, guards, and servants, not his entire family. Groups met in transit will consist of all of his



merchant

family, however.

To create a family, first determine its type by rolling 1D. 1 diplomatic, 2-3 scientific or technical, 4 or greater mercantile.

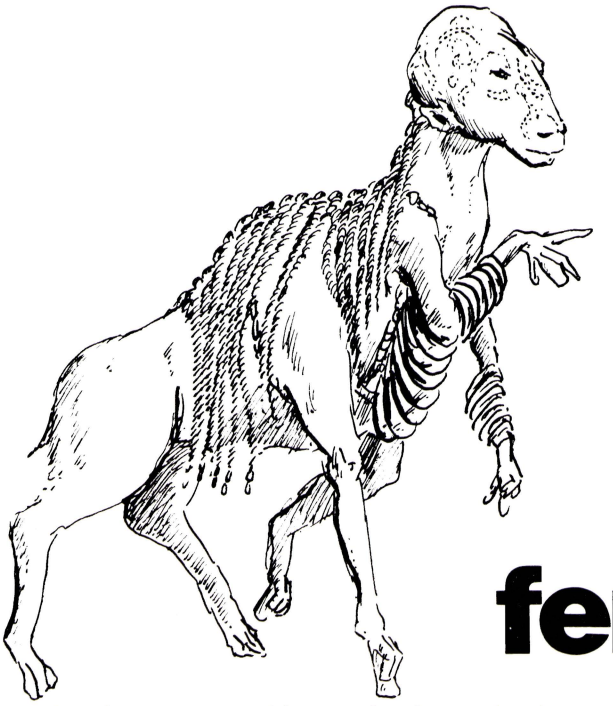
Diplomatic: Diplomatic groups can be a permanent feature of a particular world, or only there temporarily. Permanent diplomatic groups might be the Centaur consulate, or might be engaged in long term negotiations with the local government. Other deputations might be engaged in short term negotiations, or merely be passing through en route to some other world. Diplomatic missions always represent the K'kree government, and are always led by nobles. The smallest diplomatic groups should number about 18 to 24 members. These should consist of the noble, his wives, children, servants, scribes, and bodyguards, and at least three merchant caste assistants (and their families and retainers, of course).

As mentioned above, it will not always be necessary to deal with all of a family at once.

Scientific or technical: These groups might represent a group of merchants learning the latest Imperial manufacturing techniques, military officers studying tactics, sociologists studying Imperial cultures, or scientists studying the latest Imperial scientific advances. They can also be either permanent or temporary features of a particular world, depending on their purpose.

Scientific or technical groups can vary in size from 5 or 6 to 100 or more, and can be led by a member of the merchant or the noble castes, depending on the importance of the study. A noble will be present only if the subject of study is of great importance to the K'kree government. The referee must decide what is suitable. As mentioned above, it will not always be necessary for the players to always deal with the entire family.

At minimum, a small family should have the patriarch (merchant caste), his wife, a servant or two, and one or two



female

warriors. Larger groups add more of each, as well as assistants (and their families). A noble will have a larger personal retinue than a merchant, composed of more servants, warriors, wives, and children, as well as more assistants.

Mercantile: Mercantile families are either engaged in trade or in negotiations for opening trade. The smaller groups might be travelling or stationary representatives of a K'kree mercantile establishment, or a single family operating a small merchant ship. Nobles will lead mercantile families only if major trade negotiations are going on, or if the trade is extremely important to the K'kree government.

Size and make-up of the families are similar to scientific or technical families.

K'kree mercenary units do not exist, at least as humans use the term. The government will sometimes allow military units to be used by non-K'kree, but this is done only to fulfill some larger purpose of the government or as a source of additional revenue. The units do not seek tickets on their own. The organization of K'kree military units differs radically from those used by the Imperium. These will be dealt with in more detail in a later article.

Characteristics: Roll 2D+6 for endurance and strength; roll all other characteristics normally. Nobles and merchants add 2 to intelligence and education, servants subtract 4. Females subtract 3 from strength and endurance and 5 from education.

Skills: In the absence of a full character generation system, the referee must assign skills as he or she sees fit. Warriors can have any military skill (within reason), nobles and merchants any skill suited to their job, servants will have steward, and so on.

If a player insists on being allowed to play a K'kree, place him in charge of a small family. Although nominally playing the leader, the player will actually control all the members of the family. In combat, he will play the warriors, in

continued on page 15

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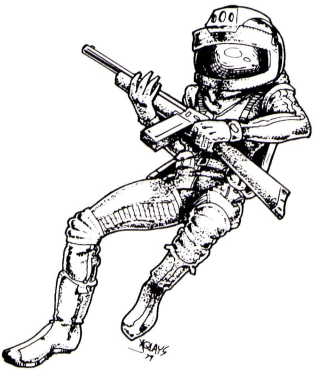

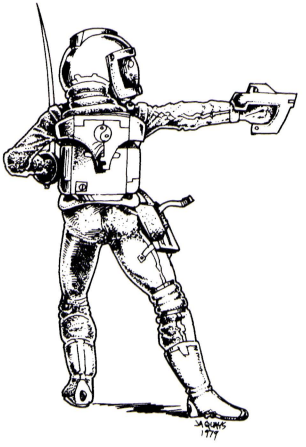

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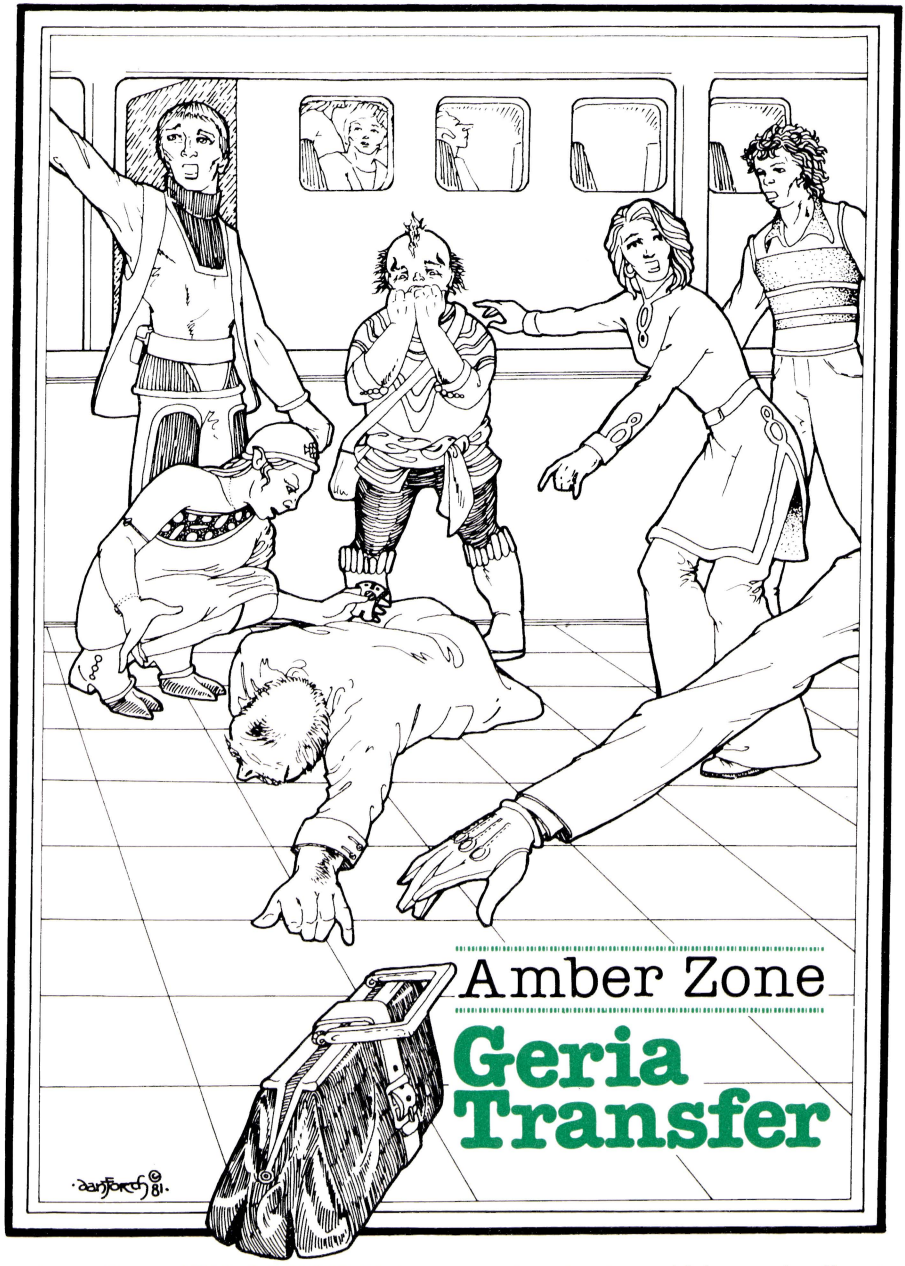

Cyris (Pesek 0501 B-769653-A) is a quiet, pastoral world that achieves a high personal income level from specialized light industry. There is only one continent, mostly savanna, 4,000 km across, with class B starports on the east and west coasts. These are connected to each other and to population centers in the interior by a high speed rail network (HSR).

The party, in Cyris Westcenter a few kilometers from the spaceport, is approached by a services factor. The factor, representing an unnamed interest, is impatient and worried; the mission she offers is urgent.

She explains that a courier, carrying a valuable industrial sample, was to transfer it offworld from Cyris Wesport this afternoon. A change in her client's plans makes it necessary for the courier to be recalled, and the sample returned to the factor. However, a freak electrical storm has suddenly closed the port to all space and air traffic (it remains open for ground transport and servicing). The courier, who cannot be normally contacted, will undoubtedly go undercover possibly travelling to Cyris Easport, which is open (the trip is 4,000 km, which will take about 8 hours by HSR.) The party is instructed to intercept the courier, who will be carefully described to them, and return the sample case to the factor. Payment on delivery of the case will be Cr20,000 for each member of the team, up to a maximum of Cr100,000.

Referee's Information:

If the players ask what "intercept" means, they will be irritatedly told that it means using whatever force is necessary; the courier is a free-lancer who will not trust anyone but his final contact.

The party will spot the courier across the massport concourse, headed for an HSR platform. Before he can be contacted, however, a person will brush him, and he will collapse with an aparent heart attack. In the resulting confusion, another person will attempt to steal the satchel, and will succeed unless the players intervene. All attempts to revive the courier will fail, regardless of medical skill available.

If the players get possession of the satchel (which is black and resembles a doctor's bag) and open it (which they will) they will find it contains an envelope filled with photos and computer printouts, and three glass tubes, filled with green liquid, in a protective holder riveted to the inside of the bag. The tubes will be recognized as microbial cultures; they bear the trademark of Gene Engineering Research and Industrial Applications Corporation (GERIA), a small genetics lab located on one of Cyris' off-continental islands.

The papers document the culture as Sabel 6-G, an organic coating for metals that stops corrosion – obviously of great industrial value. The computer program for creating Sabel 6-G is not present, but (if the team even thinks to check) only computer-4 or better will know this certainly. The envelope is chemically treated to burn furiously if ignited, totally destroying the contents.

In the bottom of the bag is a black body pistol, loaded. It is ordinary except for the well-known fact that couriers never carry guns.

Calling up the stock exchange profile of GERIA will disclose that the company is on the brink of bankruptcy. The company offices will decline all calls, but will ask where the caller may be located.

The dead man is not a courier (surprise!) but is a GERIA scientist, who stole the satchel's contents to sell privately. The two men at the port (the killer and the bagman) are GERIA security staff, attempting to recover security staff, attempting to recover company property. While GERIA still has the synthesis programs, it will take at least four weeks to synthesize more 6-G, by which time they may no longer exist as a company.

This is exactly the goal of the factor's client, who is Kjeldahl Metallfabrik SA (not located on Cyris). The team originally hired by the factor – expert professionals – were prevented from landing by the storm, and the factor had to grab the first likely replacements before the scientist could escape.

Kjeldahl wants the 6-G culture for obvious reasons. They also know, how-

ever, that if GERIA collapses financially, Kjeldahl will be able to buy it up lock, stock, and synthesis program. Therefore, if the culture is destroyed, the team will still be paid by the factor (though to insure their best efforts she will not tell them this).

If the security man steals the bag, he will rejoin his partner in a groundcar outside the terminal building. Both are armed with automatic pistols, and wear cloth armor under their topcoats. The car also contains a carbine and a shotgun.

If the team gets the satchel, they may return it to the factor (pursued by the GERIA men) or attempt to steal it for themselves (pursued by everyone). They may hide in the massport or the city, take the train or steal an aircraft – very dangerous in the storm, which will last another 48 hours before lifting suddenly, allowing the factor's first team to land.

If a buyer can be located – possibly including Kjeldahl SA – the cultures and documents together will be worth at least Cr 500,000. They will have a hard time selling the cultures undocumented, and the papers alone will be worthless. (A synthesis program can, in time, be worked out from two tubes of live culture.)

Finally: Only two tubes were stolen from GERIA, a fact only the company and the dead man know. The third tube is an aerosol germ bomb prepared as "insurance" by the renegade scientist. If it is removed from the holder, or broken open, it will be triggered, with lethal effects for everyone within 20 meters and not wearing at least a respirator. Demolitions skill may spot the bomb trigger on close inspection. The bomb is not explosive and will not damage the other tubes.

The transfer can be quick, easy money if the players are honest, and can become a planet-wide manhunt as easily – especially if the bomb goes off in a crowded massport.

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continued from page 11

encounters he will play whichever family members are in contact with the outsiders, and so on.

PLAYING CENTAURS

Players of K'kree must keep in character. K'kree will not associate with eaters of meat, nor will they willingly enter an enclosed building. Every family has a specific job to fill in K'kree society, and will never willingly deviate from that job. A trade group will not turn mercenary, a diplomatic group will not engage in speculation, and so on.

Players of K'kree should read this article carefully, and acquaint themselves as well as they can with the K'kree lifestyle.

–Loren Wiseman and Bill Keith

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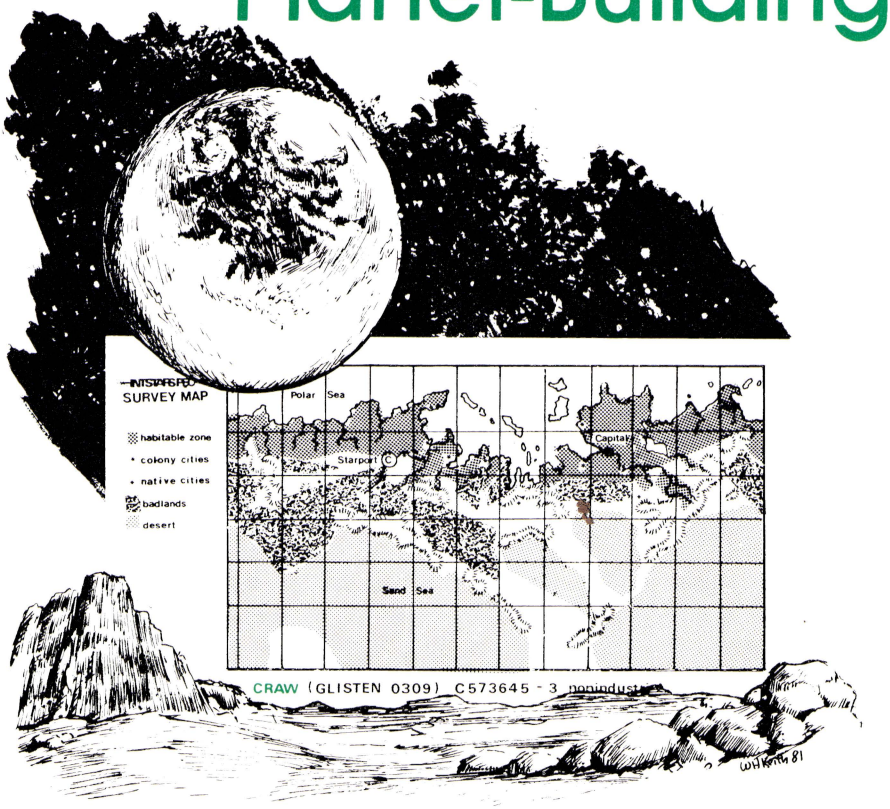
A Referee's Guide to Planet-Building

In the **Traveller** game-system, adventure is spread out among dozens, even hundreds of worlds, a wide variety which is not to be found in any other role-playing game available. The large number of planets open to the wandering adventurers of the universe allows the **Traveller** game or campaign to take on almost any aspect inspired by the players and the referee. But, at the same time, it can place something of a strain on everyone involved because of sheer weight of numbers and because of the imagination necessary to give each of those worlds a unique "personality".

The pedestrian (or overworked) referee will find the set of numbers generated in book 3 or consulted in supplement 3, *The Spinward Marches,* sufficient for his or her needs. These numbers define a planet fairly well, up to a point, but they avoid the "flavor" of world-building, the kind of attention to detail that makes SF writers like Poul Anderson, Hal Clement, and Frank Herbert so special. They enter into the game of creating a planet, taking all of the physical, cultural, and biological implications into account to give their worlds a truly special touch. Dune's shifting deserts, the fascinating life-forms of Anderson's Dido, Mesklin in all



its 700 G glory, these are planets to be remembered.

It isn't hard for the **Traveller** referee to do the same thing, and taking the time to do so is a wise move. Not only will your worlds and the adventures set upon them be more interesting, but many times the well-rounded planet will present new adventure ideas that will help along a campaign in need of a little extra lift. All the information needed to round out planets is available in the **Traveller** literature, helped along by the referee's knowledge and imagination.

Game Designers' Workshop could never hope to provide all of the details of the individual planets in the **Traveller** universe; details of all the myriad facets of our world alone would far exceed the space available in a supplement, book, or adventure. Just imagine what would be necessary to fit a solar system, a subsector, a sector, the Imperium, and all its neighbors into a format that would allow the referee to sit down and look up details on individual planets. Supplements such as *The Spinward Marches* are the best that can be done. If more detail is needed, imagination and thought must step in and take over.

The letters and numbers that make up a planet's profile are the basic building blocks of a world-building session. In this article, we're going to concentrate on some of the simple, physical attributes of a planet, expanding them into a more detailed picture of the geology, climate, and general background of the world. We'll even have a map and a hint of some of the adventures our projections make possible. The journey from raw data to finished product involves the use of the **Traveller** books and supplements, some general knowledge of our Earth and how it works, and above all, a combination of imagination and careful consideration of what will make the planet consistent with reality while still providing a source for excitement.

For our demonstration, we will refer to supplement 3, *The Spinward Marches.* On page 26, in the Glisten subsector, we come across a world by the name of Craw (Glisten 0309). The entry for the planet reads as follows:

C573645 3 Non-industrial G

Physical data comes first, if we ignore (for the moment) the starport. The size of 5 gives the planet a diameter of 5000 miles, (8000 km) making it rather on the small side as compared to Earth. The atmosphere, however, is type 7, (standard, with some kind of taint). Now, a planet the size of Mars with an Earth-like atmosphere is interesting; it points, possibly, to an Earth-like gravity. The simplest explanation, the one which won't have us meddling with scientific constants, is that the planet has roughly the same mass as Earth packed into a smaller diameter.

So, while Craw is small, its greater density gives it a gravity close to our own. This might lead the referee to modify or ignore the rule on carrying capacity from book 1 for characters adventuring on this particular planet. In addition, this high density points to a high concentration of heavy metals. Craw could be quite an attractive place, thanks to this factor. We could be dealing with one of those famous treasure-trove worlds; platinium, iridium, osmium, who knows what valuable minerals might be ripe for the taking here?

Before we finish analyzing the atmosphere, we'll skip ahead to the third number, Craw's hydrographic percentage. At 30%, there is not much in the way of water to be found in large bodies here. There are many possible ways we could use this data. Craw's

oceans could be tied up in vast glaciers, locked in the grip of an ice age, or they could take the form of many hundreds of small lakes, tiny seas, or massive swamps; for this discussion, we've chosen the most obvious solution, a small, dry desert world with a narrow habitable zone surrounding a landlocked polar sea.

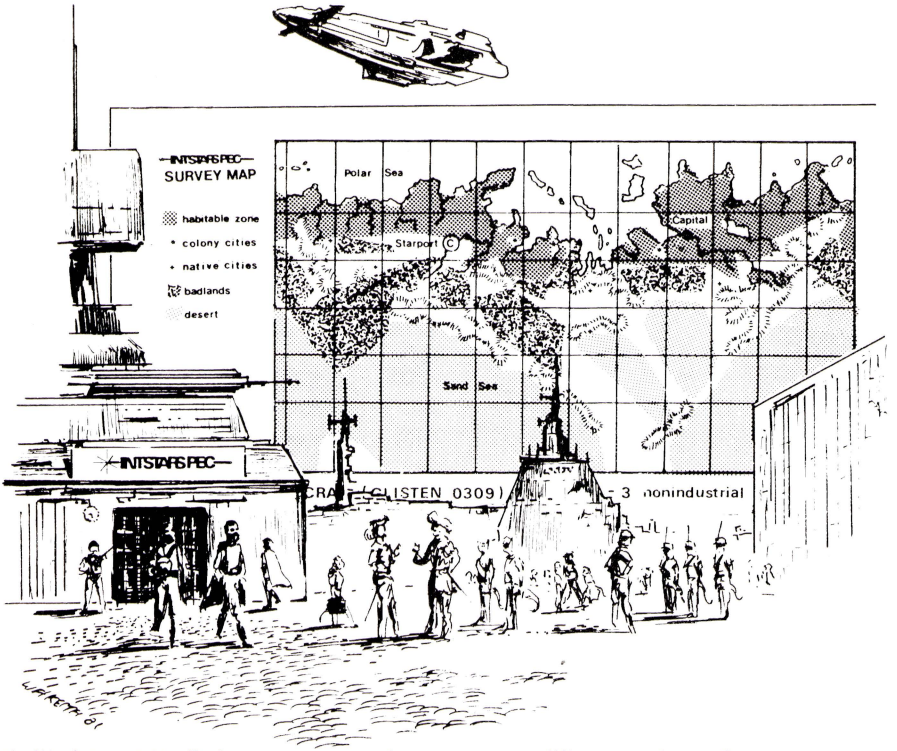
This leads back to our tainted atmosphere. The **Traveller** rules leave us a lot of leeway in determining the nature of a 'tainted atmosphere.' Anything from volcanic outgassing to poisons left from an ancient war can be covered by the phrase. The important thing is to make the air as appealing to a human character as Los Angeles on a hot summer day; in other words, nearly unbreathable. Our picture of the world has thus far given us a desert covering most of the planetary surface. If we assume a normal photosynthetic cycle for native plant life, we conclude that the taint could in this case result from a low percentage of oxygen in the air, caused by the lack of plants in the interior. Again, the referee might want to amend the rules slightly. Filter masks will not be important on this world; it isn't an impurity to be filtered out that makes this planet a problem. Oxygen gear would be more useful, but pressure being standard, there is no need for pressure suits or other such gear. By taking it easy, most healthy humans can probably manage to survive on the planet with no extra gear at all.

From the information we have put together so far, our map of Craw takes shape nicely. If using a hex-grid, the referee must be careful to keep to scale, and to use the right mathmatical formulae for computing circumference. It is also important to keep in mind what is known about the world, and make sure the work invested finds its way onto the finished map.

As we contemplate the terrain of this world, it is good to keep in mind that no planet is going to be a homogeneous unit. Ice planets, desert planets, jungle planets, these can be found in SF literature and popular movies, but rarely will we find a world where a one-word description can give us a perfect mental image of the surface of the entire world. Our world, Craw, is a world with (we presume) an arid, hot, harsh climate. This does not mean, though, that one part of Craw will look pretty much like another. Craw has a surface area of something like 72 million square miles, so there is plenty of room for variety! We can say that the polar sea was once larger, so that we can find vast expanses of water-carved badlands, dotted with lonely mesas, fragile natural bridges, and delicate rock-sculptures that howl and moan when the wind blows. There are also great salt flats, blinding to unshielded eyes and ruinous to unprotected equipment. Of course, there are large expanses of open, sahara-like desert, with wave upon wave of dunes rolling into the distance, breaking against the feet of crumbling mountains. The broad range of Earthly environments should serve as a source from which the referee can paint a picture of the world; the keynote, though, is variety.

And so we have a world. Not all of the steps in our decision-making process were recorded here. Sometimes we skipped ahead to the information on population and culture, using them to influence our physical data. While not strictly right from a scientific viewpoint, this is necessary to give the world the best make-up for the adventures we'll want to have, so a little fudging is always permissible.

What's left? Physically, very little. Craw is rich in minerals but with a harsh climate and a lot of unpleasant real estate that adventurers will be less than



thrilled to visit. Referees can use physical facts by themselves to launch a few interesting adventures, even without the benefit of information on the peoples or cultures of the planet. There are heavy metals to be sought, survival situations in which crashed adventurers must overcome nature, rescue missions to aid other shipwrecked vessels; the fiendish and fertile mind of the referee will find dozens of ways and means to irritate the players.

Up to this point, we have looked at the simplest part of planetary creation. Next, we will take up those elements which really put an individual stamp on a world: the inhabitants.

CULTURE

This begins, of course, with the people. Craw has a population level of 6. There are between one and ten million inhabitants here, a rather small population even on so harsh a world. At random, we will say there are about seven million people on Craw.

Who are they? In answer, we turn to the tech level of 3. They are a culture just at the edge of the industrial revolution that swept Earth in the late 1700's. This could indicate that they are an alien race whose technology is only beginning to reach a level of sophistication or it could point to a small population of humans, Imperial citizens, established around the starport, whose colony is new enough to prohibit the manufacture of goods more advanced than steam engines and the like. (We can imagine that most recently opened colonies will not be able to produce sophisticated gear. Many would have the look of Old Earth frontier cultures, using fairly primitive gear because they have no ability to manufacture more sophisticated items, and do not have enough of an established economy to buy advanced goods.

For our purposes, we choose yet another alternative, the classic SF ploy

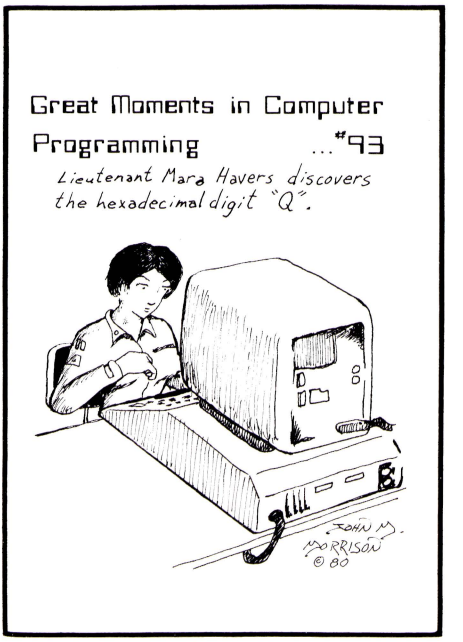
of the 'lost colony' of humans whose technology has slipped back since the days of their first landing. Many factors, and particularly the harsh necessities of survival in this inhospitable clime, have contributed to their decline.

Seven million humans make up the population reflected in the planetary profile, but 7 million is an awfully small number of people to support a budding industrial revolution. In order to give us a sufficient agrarian base on which to build, we will postulate a sizable (though rather uncertain) population of intelligent, indigenous natives as well. We'll sketch them rather briefly: roughly humanoid, adapted to life in Craw's rugged outback, with an average tech level no greater than one, except for those living closer to humans, who enjoy a slightly higher technology.

Many of these primitive locals, being adapted to the planet's oxygen poor atmosphere, will be used for heavy labor by the humans. In this case, slaves and wandering nomadic natives simply aren't going to be counted as part of the population. The situation is somewhat similar to the United States prior to 1865. These natives are enslaved by the humans, but ever prone to revolts. We should also note in passing that the government is type 4, a representative democracy, which in no way precludes this picture of a slave-holding society. Athenian Greece, Republican Rome, and, of course, our own United States have all displayed this symptom of conflict between democratic idealism and commercial necessity.

Naturally the humans look upon these natives as an inferior race and, just as naturally, those natives not enslaved will roam the outback, resenting and usually attacking on sight all humans they come across, including distressed wayfarers.

The government is another area



where we will follow the spirit rather than the letter of the rules. We see listed a representative democracy, and picture something akin to our own system. However, as we've pointed out previously, a world can rarely be considered as a monolithic whole. Time and distance assume great importance on a world where flight is not known and the steam engine is still new; to assume a world government under such circumstances is to ignore most of the realities of history and, at the same time, to ignore some interesting potentials for increasing player interest as well.

So even though we do not have a balkanized government, the nominal central government can by no means be considered to be completely in control, and a number of possibilities present themselves for quasi-independent areas.

First, the natives will have their own governmental systems (those that are not enslaved, anyway), which will vary from one group to another.

If we picture Earth in the period of history in question, we see some other possibilities open up. For instance, the representative democracy is reminiscent of the thirteen colonies just after the revolution, so why not carry out the analogy on Craw? A mother country, possibly a dictatorship, a bureaucracy, or oligarchy, is the nominal supreme power on Craw, with numerous colonies scattered throughout the habitable zone. One of these, our democracy, has just gone through a period of revolutionary turmoil to break with their founders, leaving bad feelings and the possibility of fresh conflict looming on the horizon. There's lots to keep us interested here!

The next question is, why is the democracy, apparently a minor power, listed in the planetary profile? The obvious reason is that contact with off-worlders (i.e., the starport) is centered in the democracy's territory.

The starport is a class C port, located on a tech 3 world. It has to be owned and operated by off-worlders; there's just no way to get around it! Why is such a fair-sized port located on such a backwater world? If there were military bases present, we might argue strategic concerns. Since this isn't the case, we must look further. Commerce is the other major contender, and, as we've already postulated the valuable resources on this treasure-trove world, we leap to the image of a corporate base on the world exploiting the mineral wealth and shipping it off-planet.

This adds another interesting facet to our picture. Can we make the assumption that there is a specific reason for the company to be dealing with the democracy? Commercial concerns have been known to meddle in local affairs in order to improve their profits. If the mother country on Craw wasn't willing to make a good deal, it might well be that the company encouraged a small revolution in exchange for better concessions. We can imagine the company keeping a few mercenaries on hand to guard their interests and serve as a deterrent against the mother country interfering with the democracy.

Thus, with a few quick strokes, we've added quite a bit of complexity and realism to the situation on Craw. We have numerous factions and interests, each a possible source for conflict and adventure: the company (We've called it InStarSpec), the democracy, the mother country, other colonies, the slaves, the free natives in the outback; each of these will keep things hopping.

How about life on Craw? A good parallel might be found in India during the 1800's, under the British Raj. Here we have a small body of people surrounded by a large body of natives, who are treated as inferior menials. On Craw, there might be native troops in human-officered military forces, equivalent of British Sepoy and Gurkha troops. The two human countries often confront one another, as France and Britain frequently did in colonial India. Tribesmen from the outback cause problems for both, too.

Clothing, customs, religions, details of art, architecture, music, and other aspects of the culture can all be filled in by the referee to whatever extent is deemed necessary, drawing from British India and colonial America. The realities of Craw, though, will influence things quite a bit, such as the lack of wood as a building material. Don't neglect these details; they add much to the impact of your descriptions during the course of play. And even as you draw upon the past to provide a model for your cultures, remember not to make things too commonplace or familiar. If there is any one universal in the Traveller universe, it is diversity; you'll have to

seek out elements of strangeness. Luckily, there are plenty of exotic cultures and customs right here on Earth, just choose the ones that fit your world best.

Taking a look at the rest of our stats, let's mention law level. Judging from external evidence, the low population, the tech level, and such, we can say that the company has probably not done much to interfere in local society once the revolution cleared the way for their presence. We thus decide that this law level is probably company-imposed, rather than a function of native enforcement; InStarSpec doesn't want anyone to disturb the balance of power they've nurtured. Arms limits will apply to people leaving the starport; travellers elsewhere will not be stopped by natives or human settlers looking for weapons. They might, in fact, be able to sell these if they've managed to smuggle them out of the starport. Law level can still be used normally to judge frequency of harassment and other such legal matters, but a party landing away from port need not worry about the kind of weaponry carried.

On the other hand, this argues that InStarSpec, determined to keep things under tight control, might well patrol the planet from orbit with small ships, to make sure visitors go to the starport. They might even maintain patrols or even a small base out near the gas giant, to tighten control of the system further. The referee will have to adjust the ship encounters rules to take these factors into account.

Craw is listed as 'non-industrial' in the stats, which does not in any way contradict what we've said about an industrial revolution in progress here. It means that local goods are of no great interest to the Imperium, and that the company will be forced to import certain gear for use in their mining operations. This might give the referee some ideas for getting the adventurers to Craw, say by a charter to carry heavy equipment in, or some similar cargo that cannot be obtained locally.

So there we have it! The planet is no longer just a string of letters and numbers in Supplement 3, it is a logical, self-consistent world. And look at all the adventures we've made possible: slave revolts, mutinies in the manner of the Sepoy Rebellion in India, warfare open or secret between two nations, attempts by the company to open new mines in the outback, regardless of native threats, competition from rival firms, backing locals or native tribesmen, mercenary tickets, and so on. With the addition of a clear-cut cultural background, we now have expanded the options of a **Traveller** campaign a thousand-fold.

Where do we go from here? The world is waiting, but many details must yet claim the referee's attention. In the next article, we will go one step further on Craw by describing the planet's biology and ecology, and how humans will interact with both.

Think how you would handle it. The principles are not much different from what we've done already. While your at it, take a few other worlds, either your own or from supplements, and expand them as we have done here. You've seen a few of the options, explore some of the others. Your planets, your **Traveller** adventures, can be and should be every bit as good as the best science fiction you've ever read or seen. Try it. You'll like it, your players will like it, if you go adventuring in a world that seems as real as our own.

– William H. and J. Andrew Keith

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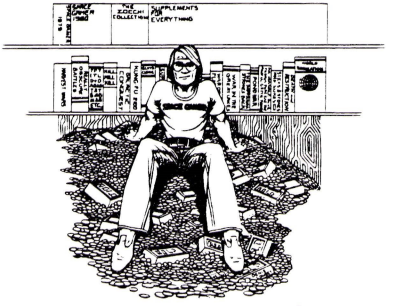

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Troops in the FIFTH FRONTIER WAR

The determination of troop strengths for worlds in *Fifth Frontier War* is based on algorithms created during the design process of the game and applicable to any worlds in the **Traveller** system. Essentially, *Fifth Frontier War* expresses troop factors as an expression of the number of battalions within the larger unit. Thus a regiment might have a factor of 3 because it contains three battalions; the varying effects of types of units are expressed by rules which

Table 1. Defense Battalions for a Specific World.

Tech	———— *Population* ————										
Level	*0*	*1*	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7*	*8*	*9*	*A*
0	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	10	1C	1K
1	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	5	50	5C	5K
2	–	–	–	–	–	1	5	50	5C	5K	50K
3	–	–	–	–	1	10	1C	1K	10K	50K	100K
4	–	–	–	–	1	10	1C	1K	2K	20K	200K
5	–	–	–	1	2	3	30	3C	3K	30K	300K
6	–	–	–	1	2	3	30	3C	3K	30K	300K
7	–	–	–	–	1	2	20	2C	2K	20K	200K
8	–	–	–	–	1	2	20	2C	2K	20K	200K
9	–	–	–	–	–	1	15	150	15C	15K	150K
10	–	–	–	–	–	1	15	150	15C	15K	150K
11	–	–	–	–	–	1	12	120	12C	12K	120K
12	–	–	–	–	–	1	12	120	12C	12K	120K
13	–	–	–	–	–	1	10	1C	1K	10K	100K
14	–	–	–	–	–	7	7	70	7C	7K	70K
15	–	–	–	–	–	–	5	50	5C	5K	50K
16	–	–	–	–	–	–	5	50	5C	5K	50K
17	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	5	50	5C	5K
18	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	5	50	5C	5K
19	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	10	1C	1K
20	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	10	1C	1K

This table indicates the defense battalion factor for a world by comparing the world tech level with the world population.

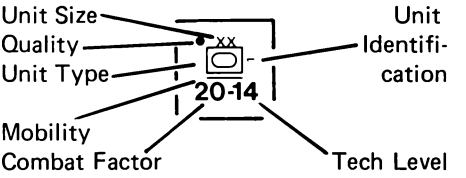
Modifications: If the world has a hostile environment (atmosphere 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, or 9+) then shift the population column one to the left (effectively reducing the number of battalions present).

alter the factor at the instant of combat. Worlds have standing armies which are expressed as a single factor; these immobile defense battalions indicate the strength of the defense of any specific world. Table 1 uses population and technological level to determine the general troop strength for any world. *Fifth Frontier War* ignores the troops of any world with a technological level of less than 5 because such troops would have little influence on a war of interstellar proportions. They are shown on table 1 for completeness.

Mobile Troops: While most of a world's troops are defensive in nature, the standing army will have some which are provided with the mobility to be transported off-world on assault carriers or other ships. These troops in *Fifth Frontier War* are provided with counters to represent them. Each world receives one (in some cases more) unit of the factor shown in Table 2. Such counters are then produced with the correct unit size (from Table 3) and technological level for the world which is their origin. The mobile forces from worlds in the game were determined using the algorithm of this article as a base. Additional forces for other worlds can be similarly determined, as can the strengths of mercenary or other forces.

Counter Format: When troop counters are produced to represent additional forces in *Fifth Frontier War* they should be executed in the troop unit counter format using symbols and indicators as used in the game. In addition to factor and tech level, the counter must show mobility type (grav or lift is standard; wheeled or leg are possibilities), and unit size (from the troop unit size table with the strengths as a guide). The referee must independently determine what the unit designation and unit type are.

TROOP UNIT COUNTER FORMAT



TROOP UNIT SIZES

Symbol	*Unit Size*	*Combat Factor*
II	Battalion	1 or 2
III	Regiment	5
X	Brigade	10
XX	Division	20
XXX	Corps	50-1C
XXXX	Field Army	5C

TROOP TYPES AND MOBILITY

Symbol	*Type or Mobility*
⊠	Infantry; Lift Infantry
⊠	Armored Infantry; Lift Infantry
⊘	Cavalry; Lift Cavalry
⊘	Armored Cavalry; Lift Cavalry
⬭	Tank; Grav Tank
★	Marine
⊠	Jump Troop
G	Guerrilla
—	Lift, Grav
••	Motorized

All units with the tank symbol (armored infantry, armored cavalry, tank) are doubled in combat factor in combat.

Guerrilla units have special abilities.

Units may be evaluated as to quality by the referee. In general, only approximately 10% of all troop unit counters are elite. Those which are elite are marked with a quality dot in the upper right left hand corner of the counter. Such units are doubled in factor. Referees should exercise caution in awarding the elite unit marking; perhaps such an award should await experience of the unit in battles. Once several battles are won, the marking may be allowed.

Factor Abbreviations: For a variety of format and esthetic reasons, factors for troop counters are abbreviated using the letters C and K. C indicates hundreds, thus making the abbreviation 1C mean 100 and 7C mean 700. K indicates thousands, making 1K mean 1000 and 50K mean 50,000.

USING ADDITIONAL UNITS

The uses for the algorithms in this article are many. The following are just a few suggestions.

1. Additional Reinforcements: As players become involved in battles within the *Fifth Frontier War,* they may be called upon to raise low tech level forces to fight off Zhodani (or other) invading forces. A large scale engagement using *Fifth Frontier War* troop rules to resolve a battle between a horde of tech 2 troops against a single tech 14 regiment could be an interesting situation.

2. Battles In Other Campaigns: A group of adventurers could become involved with a mercenary unit on the fringes of civilization. The battles between the unit and local military forces can be resolved using the rules from *Fifth Frontier War* and units rated up using this article.

3. Medium Unit Actions: Battles for any purpose can be resolved using this algorithm and *Fifth Frontier War* rules.

UNIT QUALITY

Symbol	*Quality Level*
blank	Standard Quality
●	Elite Unit.

Elite units are doubled in factor.

Table 2. Mobile battalions available for operations off-world.

Bns	*1*	*2*	*3*	*5*	*10*	*20*	*1C*	*5C*
1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
2	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
3	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
5	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
10	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
12	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
15	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
20	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	–
30	–	–	1	–	–	–	–	–
50	–	–	–	1	–	–	–	–
1C	–	–	–	2	–	–	–	–
120	–	1	–	–	1	–	–	–
150	–	–	–	1	1	–	–	–
2C	–	–	–	–	–	1	–	–
3C	–	–	–	–	1	1	–	–
5C	–	–	–	–	1	2	–	–
1K	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	–
12C	–	–	–	–	–	1	1	–
15C	–	–	–	–	–	2	1	–
2K	–	–	–	–	–	–	2	–
3K	–	–	–	–	–	–	3	–
5K	–	–	–	–	–	–	4	–
10K	–	–	–	–	–	–	5	–
12K	–	–	–	–	1	–	5	–
15K	–	–	–	–	–	1	6	–
20K	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1
30K	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	2
50K	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	3
100K	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	4
120K	–	–	–	–	–	1	–	4
150K	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	4
200K	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	5
300K	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	6

This chart is based on a sliding scale beginning with 10% of the troops available, and declining in proportion at higher troop levels.

77th Patron

77. Spy **Required Skills:** none **Required Equipment:** Starship

Players' Information:

While in Attica Startown the group finds a wounded man lying in an alleyway, apparently dying. He motions the group to him and tells them his story. The man is the last surviving member of an IISS covert intelligence team, operating in the Querion subsector. During the course of their investigations, the team discovered (or rather stole) plans dealing with Zhodani defense installations for the subsector.

They were discovered, but he managed to escape with the plans, although mortally wounded. Obviously the plans would be very useful to the Imperium. If the group will take the plans (on a microdot, inside a child's plastic toy) to the Imperial naval base at Jewell, they will be rewarded with Cr100,000 and the knowledge of a job well done.

On acceptance, he will hand over the toy, urge the group to beware of the Zhodani thought police – the Tavrchedle' – and slump down, apparently dead. If the group do not accept, he will activate an incineration device, destroying the toy and the plans.

Referee's Information:

After 1D6 rounds a police patrol vehicle will be heard approaching. The patrol will slow down when nearing the group's area, and will train spotlights on the area.

The chance of evading the patrol is high, but security checks at Attica starport, and all other Zhodani influenced starports in Querion subsector, will be tighter. When determining harassment by starport officials, apply a DM of -2 .

1. All is as represented. If the group is stopped, Tavrchedle' will be present during the interrogation on 10+; if so, the group will be discovered immediately. Otherwise the plans will be discovered on a roll of 8+. If the plans are not found, the group will be set free, but they will be followed, of course.

2-3. All is as represented in 1, but starport security is tighter and the DM for harrassment is -3.

4. The dead man is not a IISS agent, but is in fact a Zhodani agent, part of a large operation designed to give false information to the Imperium. The group will be stopped at the starport, given a 'severe' grilling and searched. All of this is window dressing to keep the group from becoming suspicious.

5-6. As in four, but the group will notice they are being followed on the way to the starport by a group of 2D Zhodani. They have been instructed to allow the group to escape, but to wound or kill up to 25% of them before allowing themselves to be driven off. This is to convince the group that the information they have is genuine.

A date within three months of the outbreak of the war should be used at the beginning, to allow the group time to get to Jewell.

– Trevor Graver

Military Academy:
An Option for Mercenary

by Terry McInnes

Any character who is serving in the army or marines will find it extremely difficult to secure a commission under *Mercenary* character generation rules, and will usually wind up leaving the service as a senior NCO.

While it is certainly true that there are many more enlisted ranks and NCOs than officers in most military organizations, some referees may feel that player characters deserve a greater chance of being commissioned than that given in the book 4 system. Here is a modest proposal to increase the chances of commission, yet not wind up with too many officers in the army and marines: a military academy option similar to that in *High Guard*.

Because there are relatively fewer officers in the army or marines than the navy, we will omit the college officer training course option found in book 5 from this module.

MILITARY ACADEMY (4 years)

		DMs:
Admission	10+	+2 if Str 10+
Success	9+	+2 if Educ 8+
Education	1D-3	+1 if Intel 9+
Honors	9+	+1 if Intel 9+

Skills: Successful graduates receive these skills on a roll of 1D for 4+ (roll once per skill): Tactics, Admin, Leader, Hvy Weapons, Fwd Obs, Computer. Cadets receive Combat Rifleman-1 automatically.

The admission roll determines if the character is accepted by the academy. The success roll determines if the char- successful, the character has aged one year (to age 19) and is immediately drafted into the army for a short three year term. The education roll indicates the character's increased education. In addition, the indicated skills are received on a roll of 1D for 4+. If the honors roll is achieved, the character is recognized for scholastic and martial accomplishment and may elect to attend either the Imperial Staff College or Commando School during his first year of active service. In any case, the character has graduated from the Military Academy, and automatically receives a commission as a second lieutenant in the army at age 22. Because of the associations that develop during their time as cadets and because of the skills acquired by their training, Academy graduates receive an automatic +1 DM on their promotion die rolls.

ARMY

Any character with a social standing of 6+ who has enlisted in the Imperial army may, at age 18, apply for enrollment at the nearest campus of the Imperial Military Academy. Unlike Naval Academy applicants, Military Academy applicants with high social standing have no advantages when seeking admission. Physical strength is

prized instead at the Military Academy.

MARINES

Imperial marine officers, because of their close affiliation with the Imperial navy, are trained differently. In addition to the existing OCS path to a commission, characters who wish to serve in the Imperial marines may elect to attend the naval academy as a pre-enlistment option.

Once they graduate, they are commissioned as marine second lieutenants instead of navy ensigns. If they successfully graduate with honors, they may also attend flight school as marine officers. The medical school option is not open to marine officers as they are treated by naval surgeons. All marines receive rudimentary first aid training, and some are selected for corpman training, but this is handled in the normal character generation system.

Upon either their graduation from the naval academy or completion of (or scrubbing out of) flight school, the new marine officers must spend their first year on active duty in the Marine Officers Training School, a branch of Officers Candidate School where newly commissioned second lieutenants receive training in marine combat techniques, leadership, and the traditions of the service.

As with OCS training, MOTS graduates roll one command skill, one staff skill, and one additional MOS skill from the marine branch table.

MOTS graduates who have also attended flight school may elect to join either the marine branch or the flight branch in Book 5 as marine pilots assigned to Marine Flight Wings. These units serve aboard some fleet cruisers or carriers and are specialists in close support work for marine units making planetary assaults. Marine flight wings may also function in support of dirtside marine units in the close orbit control role.

Marine officers on flight status may revert to the regular marine branches at the conclusion of any four-year term. However, while on flight status, assignment resulution and branch skills are rolled on the flight branch table.

— Terry McInnes

Ordeal By ESHAAR

As the FIFTH FRONTIER WAR locks the Spinward Marches in mortal combat, a band of adventurers journeys outside the Imperium on a mission of vital importance. Their destination: ESHAAR a dangerous and hostile world where temperatures average 150° C . . . where sulfuric acid takes the place of water . . . where enigmatic aliens hold the key to success or failure for the Imperium. The mission: discover - and secure control of - Affas, a mineral compound that could turn the tide of the FIFTH FRONTIER WAR. The opposition: the devious Zhodani, who will stop at nothing to ruin the Imperial cause.

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Poltroonery, Courts Martial, and the Imperial Code of Military Justice

Within the **Traveller** military *(High Guard* and *Mercenary),* we have provisions for death, decoration, promotion, and skills. We find no provision for disciplinary action. Now, any veteran can tell you that your military superiors never see you doing anything right. This makes disciplinary action much more common than decorations (ask Murphy about this one). The following changes add this missing facet of military life, but it is at the expense of adding some 'dirt' to the system. These changes are recommended only for experienced players who want to add some color to their military characters.

The key to these changes is the decoration roll every year. If a character fails a decoration roll by six or more (say by rolling 4 when 10+ was needed) he has run afoul of military law. He must now roll one die on the appropriate court martial severity table. For those assignments where no decoration is possible, assume a value of 12 to check for disciplinary action. Navy medics and techs should be given a break on this, however. Optionally, you may want to introduce cowardice. This would allow players to apply a positive DM to their survival roll, but would require an equal sized negative modifier on decoration. This makes them more likely to be court-martialed. This would negate *High Guard,* page 4, Decorations: "The reverse of this procedure (positive DMs for survival and then foregoing decorations because of the negative DM) is not allowed."

ref's notes

Enlisted men are automatically guilty, but officers get a saving throw against conviction. If they make it, they are acquitted.

— *Robert Bodine*

COURT MARTIAL SEVERITY TABLE, enlisted ranks

Die Roll:	*Effect:*
-1	Case dismissed
0	Reprimand (-1 to promotion)
1	Reprimand (-3 to promotion)
2	Reduction in rank (1 grade)
3	Reduction in rank (2 grades)
4	Jail (2D months) and reduction in rank (2 grades)
5	Jail (1D years) and dishonorable discharge
6	Jail (2D years) and dishonorable discharge
7	Condemned. You escape; Cr100,000 reward
8	Condemned. You escape; killing 1D guards; Cr1,000,000 reward

DMs for Court Martial Severity Tables: +1 for senior NCO's (E-7 & up), +2 for officer in command, +2 for combat assignment (battle, strike, siege, police action, raid, or counterinsurgency), -2 for training, garrison, and shore duty, -1 per brownie point (see below).

COURT MARTIAL SEVERITY TABLE, Officer ranks

Die Roll:	*Effect:*
0	Case dismissed
1	Reprimand (-1 to promotion)
2	Reprimand (-3 to promotion)
3	Resign (honorable discharge)
4-5	Resign (bad conduct discharge)
6	Jail (1D years) and dishonorable discharge
7-8	Jail (2D years) and dishonorable discharge
9	Condemned. You escape; Cr100,000 reward.
10	Condemned. You escape, killing 1D guards; Cr1,000,000 reward.

Officers get a saving throw against courts martial, 10+. DMs +1 per admin skill level, +1 per brownie point.

Brownie Points: 1 per MCG, 2 per SEH, 1 per term over three, 1 per previous assignment as aide, instructor (in schools), at command college, or at staff college, 1 per social level over 10. Brownie points are expended when used.

COURTS MARTIAL RESULTS EXPLANATION

Case Dismissed: You have lucked out. They caught the real culprit, or there was insufficient evidence, or you have something on the general or whatever. You are free to continue your military career.

Reprimand: This is the lightest conviction sentence there is. You have an automatic negative DM for all future promotion die rolls, until you succeed, at which point you have cleared your record and are free to continue your military career.

Reduction in Rank: You have been busted, and are now one or two ranks lower than before.

Jail: You have really screwed up this time, and somebody saw you do it. If your sentence is in months, you are still are in the service. If it is in years, then you are dishonorably discharged upon completion of your sentence.

Comdemned: Your crimes have been judged so heinous that they are asking the ultimate price. However, fortune smiles on you, and you make good your escape. You are now an imperial fugitive with a price on your head and every man's hand against you. Good luck!

Resign (for officers only): You have been offered a chance to resign quietly, for the good of the corps, and you accept.

DISCHARGES

Discharges come in three types, honorable, bad conduct, and dishonorable:

Honorable: No change in material or cash benefits, and no change in pension status.

Bad Conduct: Total all medals, counting 1 for MCUF, 2 per MCG, 3 per SEH and add 1 per term served. From this subtract 2 for each reduction in rank, 1 or 3 for each reprimand (according to the promotion DM), and 1 for each month spent in jail. If the result is negative, this is subtracted from the number of rolls the character gets for mustering out benefits. Pensions are allowed.

Dishonorable: Three fewer rolls than normal; only results of 2, 3, or 4 are allowed, and other die rolls are wasted. No pensions or other cash benefits are allowed.

This summer, Game Designers' Workshop received the following awards:

At Origins '81, held in San Mateo California:

Game Designers' Guild Select Awards
Azhanti High Lightning
Tacforce

H. G. Wells Awards
Best Miniatures Rules, 1980
Tacforce

Best Role-Playing Adventure, 1980
Twilight's Peak

Best Professional Magazine covering Role-playing
Journal of the Travellers' Aid Society

Best Fantasy or Science Fiction Boardgame
Azhanti High Lightning

At Gen-Con XIV, held in Kenosha Wisconsin:

Strategists' Club Awards
Best Miniatures Rules, 1980
Tacforce

Best Boardgame, 1980
Azhanti High Lightning

Game Designers' Workshop and the Journal of the Travellers' Aid Society would like to thank the members of the Academy of Adventure Gaming Arts and Design and all those who voted for us, making these awards possible.

continued from page 5

Design: Dave Sering

Publisher: Judges Guild, RR 8, Box 9, 1221 N. Sunnyside, Decatur, IL, 62522.

Glimmerdrift Reaches, Crucis Margin

Two new guidebooks to a portion of Imperial space by Judges guild. Both contain a map of a sector, and a guidebook to the 16 subsectors of that sector, along with 8 planetary surface maps, rumors, and a short history of the region. Approved for use with **Traveller.**

One 22x34" map, and 32 page guidebook. $4.98

Design: Dave Sering and Steve Crow

Publisher: Judges Guild, RR 8, Box 9, 1221 N. Sunnyside, Decatur, IL 62522.

ZISMV: Vlezhdatl

Another in the continuing series of deck plans from FASA. This set depicts a Zhodani strike cruiser, of great use to anyone conducting adventures using the *Fifth Frontier War* as a background. As with previous deck plans, the Vlezhdatl is done on the standard ½" grid, making it suitable for use with *Snapshot* or *Azhanti High Lightning.* Approved for use with **Traveller.**

Nine 17x11" sheets and one ten page book. $7.50.

Design: Jordan Weisman and L. Ross Babcock III.

Publisher: FASA, PO Box 6930, Chicago, IL 60680.

Magazines:

Alien Star

A **Traveller** fanzine published in England. Four issues have appeared thus far, each with adventures, scenarios, deck plans, weaponry, and rules variations. Each issue runs about 30 pages, typewritten, mimeographed, with illustrations. Subscriptions cost £3.60 in the UK, £4.80 overseas (airmail). Back issues are available at £1.20 each (issues 1 to 4).

Publisher: Robert MacMahon, 16 Egdon Drive, Marley, Wimborne, Dorset, UK BH21 1TY.

Dark Star

Another **Traveller** fanzine, also published in England. Appearing monthly, the issue on hand is number 2, containing some news and industry gossip, a short article on a system defense boat and a contact list for **Traveller** players and referees.

Single issues are available for 20p and a stamped, self-addressed envelope, subscriptions are £1 for three issues (do not subscribe for more than three issues).

Publisher: Trevor Graver, 69 Lakside Road, London, W14 0DZ, UK.

Note: With this zine, and Alien Star, send an international money order for the correct amount, converting £ to $ at the rate of $2.50 to £1. 100p =£1.

Dragon

The latest issue to arrive at this writing, number 51, contains seven **Traveller** articles (one of them by Marc Miller) and reviews of *Triplanetary* and *Traders and Gunboats* as well as all their usual features.

Single issues are $3.00, subscriptions are $24 for 12 issues or $50 for 24.

Publisher: TSR Publications, PO Box 110, Lake Geneva, WI 53147.

The Space Gamer

Issue number 40 conatins 13+ pages of **Traveller** ralated material, including a piece by Marc Miller, and an article detailing Jack Vance's world of Tschai.

Single issues are available for $2.50 and subscriptions for $21 for one year, $39 for two years.

Publisher: The Space Gamer, 7207 Onion Crossing Dr, Austin, TX, 78744.

New for TRAVELLER

ROBERT L. ASPRIN'S **thieves' world** awaits you. Based on the immensely popular anthologies THIEVES' WORLD and TALES FROM THE VULGAR UNICORN, this aventure pack opens up a new world for exploration. Marc Miller provided the statistics for all of the major characters from the stories, developed a world designation and subsector location, and even derived a magic system for Traveller players. The pack includes two 16-page Players' Guides, a 64-page Gamemasters' Guide, and a 64-page Personalities book, plus three maps of the city of Sanctuary. All this boxed for $15.95.

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Amber Zone

Coup D'etat

The group is contacted by Glorinna Firella, daughter and sole heir of a planet on the fringes of the Imperium. Her father, Alexandro, is king, a constitutional monarch with a representational parliament. Although a good ruler, Alexandro is not overly popular with his people, and a number of groups in opposition to his reign have risen in recent months. The most dangerous of these, although by no means the largest in number, is a collection of middle echelon military officers and businessmen. Alexandro is surrounded by corrupt and incompetant advisors, and will not believe the extent of popular dissatisfaction with his rule. Glorinna is worried over the possibility of a popular uprising, and suspects that the colonel of the Royal Companions regiment, Kang Ladro, is secretly in sympathy with the rebels. Glorinna is seeking a mercenary contingent to protect herself and her father in the event of revolution.

Referee's Information:

The contract is for a company-sized unit to protect Glorinna and her father. Glorinna, however, has seriously underestimated the extent of unrest, and the rebellion will begin shortly after the unit lands, before any real steps can be taken to secure the situation. Glorinna and the mercenary unit will manage to escape the capital to one of the royal estates, but Alexandro will refuse to come. At the estate, Glorinna will be able to conclude arrangements with the owner of a merchant ship to transport them off-planet. In one week, the vessel can refuel, and enter orbit over the estate. The ship's owner has also promised to arrange for a shuttle to be available to transfer Glorinna and the

company to the ship.

The royal estate is several kilometers from the capital, where fighting is still going on between loyalist army units and those units which have joined the rebellion. The planet's small air force has chosen to remain in barracks for the duration of the emergency. The former Royal companions regiment is heavily engaged against the loyalists, but Ladro considers it important to capture Glorinna in order to further his scheme to gain power. Ladro aspires to set himself up as king and marriage to Glorinna would strengthen his position. A platoon of the former Companions and two companies of the rebel army have been assigned the task of taking Glorinna alive.

The estate itself is not well suited to defense. It is located in the midst of a lightly wooded region, and is protected on two sides by a small river. The buildings are old stone structures intended to blend aesthetically into the region, not withstand an attack. In the defense along with the mercenaries are a scratch collection of about forty estate employees and local peasants of doubtful fighting value, armed with a random assemblage of civilian hunting weapons and farm implements, with a sprinkling of military weapons such as auto rifles and a grenade or two. In addition, a platoon of local reservists (a total of thirty-two effectives, equipped at TL 6) has rallied to the princess' side. The defenders will have one day to prepare their defenses before the attackers arrive. If they can survive the next six days, the shuttle will be able to provide sufficient air support to drive off the attackers temporarily. During this time, the defenders will be able to be ferried to the orbiting starship.

The attacking forces are a platoon of ex-Companions, forty men, equipped to TL 9, and two companies of regulars, 116 men each, equipped to TL 8.

Glorinna will escape with enough of her personal funds to pay the mercenaries Cr750,000. She will ask them to stay with her, and form the core of a counter-revolutionary force.

— Loren Wiseman

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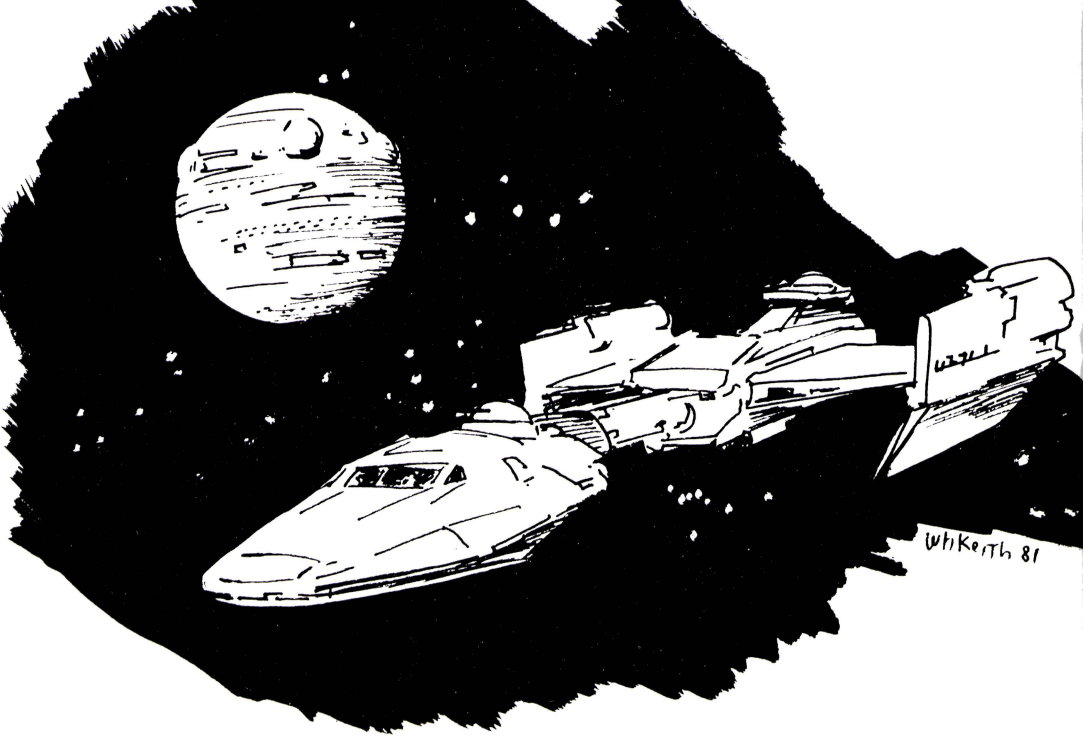


Trillion Credit Squadron Winners

This summer, the first of GDW's *Trillion Credit Squadron* tournaments were held, drawing about thirty entrants each. These tournaments were held at Origins, in San Mateo California, Gen-Con East, in Cherry Hill New Jersey, and Gen-Con XIV, near Kenosha Wisconsin.

The Winner at Origins was Doug Lenat, of Los Altos, California. The winner at Gen-Con East was Martin Misciagna, of Brooklyn, New York. The winner at Gen-Con XIV was Mike Moline, of St. Cloud, Minnesota.

Doug Lenat's fleet was the most unique, and since space consideration prohibit us printing them all, we decided thet Doug's fleet would be of the most interest to the readers of the Journal.

Doug's fleet consisted of ninety-six ships and cost MCr998,642.

Four *Garter* class :

TB-Garter TB-K1567F3-B41106-34009-1 MCr17,584.104 12,000 tons
Batteries Bearing C 1 EE 7 Crew=170
Batteries C 1 EE 7 TL=C
Passengers=0. Low=85. Cargo=4.3. Fuel=840. EP=840. Agility=4. Marines=0.

Note: L-hyd drop tanks add 6000 tons of fuel and mass (TB-K1344F3), change the agility to 4, and cost MCr6.01. The ship is designed to maneuver when carrying up to 72,000 tons of drop tanks, and one Wasp fighter.

Four *Cisor* class:

BD-Cisor BD-K9525F3-E41100-340C5-0 MCr22,291.175 19,980 tons
Batteries Bearing 1 11 1U
Batteries 1 11 1U
Passengers=0. Low=95. Cargo=19.1. Fuel=999. EP=999. Agility=0. Marines=0.

Note: L-hyd drop tanks add 9,990 tons of fuel and mass (BD-L9313F3), change the agility to 0, and cost MCr10. The ship is designed to maneuver when carrying up to 29,970 tons of drop tanks.

Three *Queller* class:

BH-Queller BH-K1526F3-B41106-34Q02-1 MCr27,802.392 19,600 tons
Batteries Bearing Z 1 NN1 N Crew=263
Batteries Z 1 NN1 N TL=C
Passengers=0. Low=232. Cargo=10.72. Fuel=1176. EP=1176. Agility=0 Marines=20(

Note: L-hyd drop tanks add 9,800 tons of fuel and mass (BH-L1314F3) and cost MCr9.81. The ship is designed to maneuver when carrying up to 29,400 tons of drop tanks and fighters (one Wasp and one Bee).

Seventy-five *Eurisko* class:

BA-Eurisko BA-K952563-J41100-34003-0 MCr13,030.385 11,100 tons
Batteries Bearing 1 11 V Crew=131
Batteries 1 11 V TL=C
Passengers=0. Low=0. Cargo=8. Fuel=555. EP=555 Agility=2. Marines=35

Note: L-hyd drop tanks add 5,550 tons of fuel and mass (BA-K931363), change the agility to 1, and cost MCr5.56. The ship is designed to maneuver when carrying up to 16,650 tons of drop tanks.

Seven *Wasp* class;

IL-Wasp IL-A90ZZF2-J00000-00009-0 MCr896.75 1,000 tons
Batteries Bearing 1 Crew=19
Batteries 1 TL=C
Passengers=0. Low=0. Cargo=0. Fuel=60. EP=60. Agility=6. Marines=0.

Three *Bee* class:

FF-Bee FF-0906661-A30000-00001-0 MCr127.945 99 tons
Batteries Bearing 1 2 Crew=1
Batteries 1 2 TL=C
Passengers=0. Low=0. Cargo=0. Fuel=5.94. EP=5.94. Agility=0. Marines=0.

The Bestiary

Tree Rat

(Abdor var.)

The Focaline Tree Rat is a small rodent-like creature native to Focaline (in the Aramis subsector). It weighs 3-4 kilograms, and measures 70-80 cm in length. Two thirds of its length is tail. Tree rats have a red-brown fur covering the entire body except for the soles of their paws. Some specimens are shaded more to a deep chocolate brown or maroon. Tree rats seem able to adapt very quickly to temperature changes, and exposure to cold weather for more than a week results in their growing a thicker and rougher coat. Though they physically resemble terrestrial rodent types, tree rats have longer legs, feet adapted to grasping, and a prehensile tail that all help them in their arboreal habitats. This tail allows tree rats to easily pick up small objects and hang from tree limbs using their tail alone (most tree rats sleep in this fashion). In the wild, tree rats use their tails to carry food to treetop nests, to retrieve food dropped into areas that cannot otherwise be reached with paws, and in combat, either to free their other limbs for the fight or to grab a small opponent and dislodge it from its perch on a limb. They are omnivores, and have very sharp teeth that they use to pierce thick fruit skins (or unwary fingers!). They are quite intelligent (about the same level as most small Terran monkeys) and have an elaborate social structure in natural environments.

On their homeworlds, tree rats are looked upon with a mixture of dislike

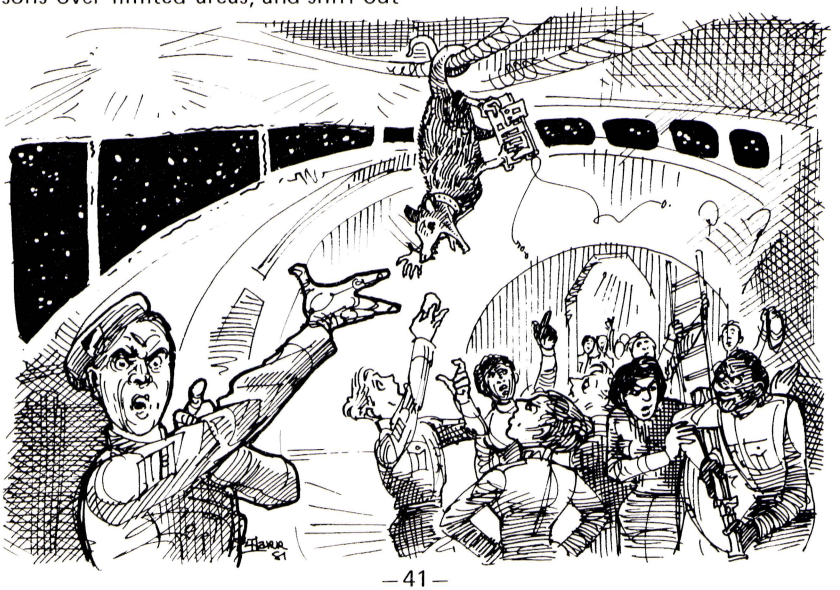
and appreciation. They are prone to raid fruit-bearing plants, (their chief food) and are thus not popular with orchard owners and the like, but they also feed upon and control local pests (such as the ubiquitous norway rat) that destroy or spoil other more financially important crops on the planet. Tree rats have proven quite popular pets in many places (especially in places where small animals present a pest problem), as well as on starships as mascots or personal pets. This practice has led to the spread of tree rats throughout most of the spinward reaches of the Imperium.

Focaline tree rats have an extremely well developed olfactory system, and much of their intraspecies communication is based on the detection of emotional states through different smells. When exposed to human company for longer than a year, tree rats can learn to distinguish emotions such as fear or anger in humans by smell. They can easily be trained for certain tasks, such as sniffing out small component microfires or bearing burnouts. Some planetary police forces have trained tree rats to track creatures or persons over limited areas, and sniff out hidden illegal cargoes, but such training takes a year or so, and requires constant reinforcement.

As pets, tree rats are quite successful. Their mammalian physiology allows them to eat most of the foods that humans do. They shed little, except when getting rid of a cold-weather coat, and are naturally clean animals, easily housebroken.

Tree rats have an average lifespan of fifteen years, mate for life, and bear young once a year after age three, in litters of about four "ratlings". Their major drawback as pets is their insatiable curiosity, which has led to their accidentally being locked in airlocks or food bins. They also like to collect bits of shiny or brightly colored material (like coins, keys, and credit cards), depositing them in a nest in their owner's cabin, a trait which has earned them the nickname "cinnamon thief". This can develop into a game the tree rat initiates by picking up a valuable item in its tail and then racing around the ship, with the item's owner(s) in hot pursuit.

— Roger Moore



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In Miniature

TRAVELLER™

Science-Fiction Adventure in the Far Future

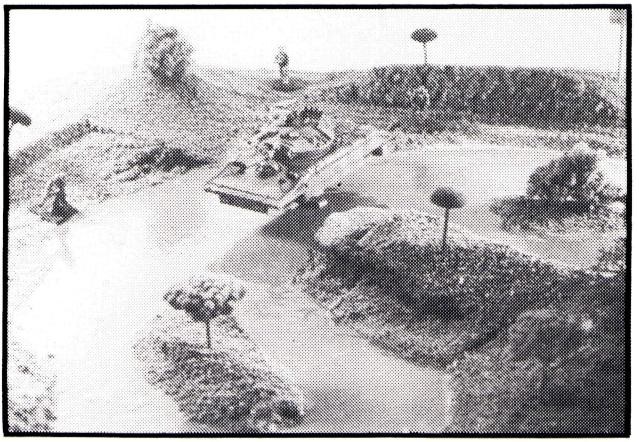


Figure 1.
A grav tank and attached infantry in battledress, crossing a river.

The use of miniature figures in games dates back a good many years. The use of gaming miniatures in role-playing games is a much more recent phenomenon. Those **Traveller** players who do not use miniature figures are missing out on one of the most appealing (albeit somewhat costly in time and money) aspects of role-playing games. Gaming miniatures add color and excitement to all but the most routine adventures. For the purposes of this article, we shall limit ourselves to discussion of miniatures for tactical use (individuals and vehicles) rather than spacecraft.

Miniatures come in a variety of scales. The two most commonly used in role-playing are 25mm and 15mm (the approximate height of a standing human figure). See figure 2 for a size comparison. GDW recommends the use of 15mm figures because they are less expensive and because vehicles and the extremely powerful weapons of future combat can be handled with facility. A line of 15mm figures approved for use with **Traveller** is manufactured by Martian Metals.

Why use miniatures? Miniature figures speed up certain situations and can simplify the referee's task. Using miniature figures, it is a simple matter to see where every character is, and it is fairly easy to determine what he or she is doing. Instead of asking the players where they are going and having to constantly update a mental picture of the action, the referee can simply tell the players to move their own figures (assuming they know the rules of move-

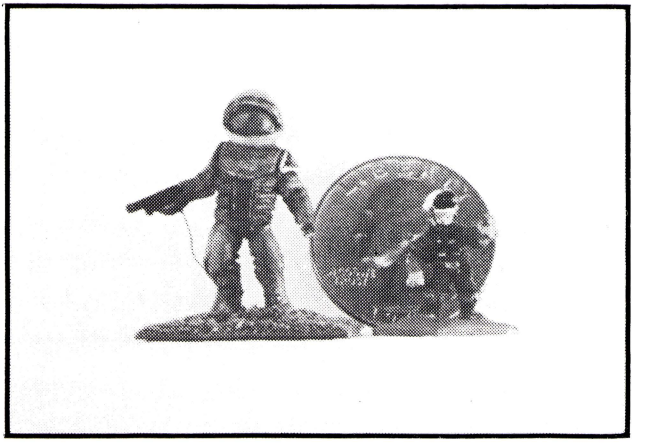
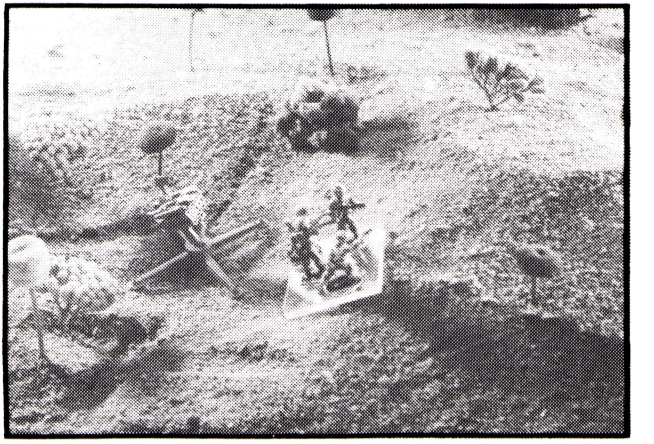


Figure 2.
Size comparison of 25mm (left) and 15mm (right) figures. Figures shown actual size.

Figure 3.
Infantry mounted on a fireteam base (for use with *Mercenary* or *Striker)* advance past a remote MRL.



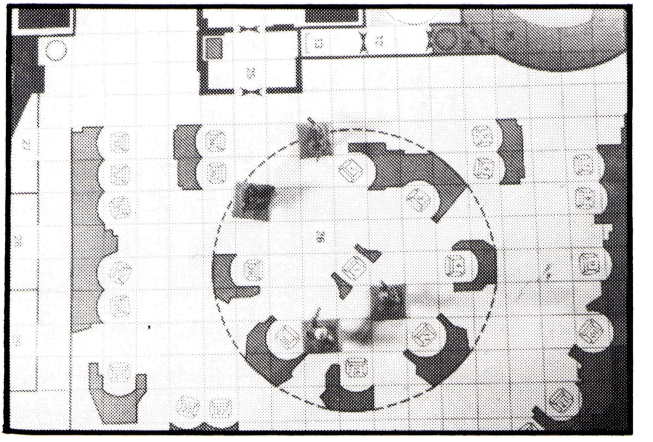


Figure 4.
Security forces in a firefight with Vargr hijackers on the *Emissary,* of the Oberlindes lines.

Figure 5.
A kidnapping in progress on board the *ISCV King Richard.*

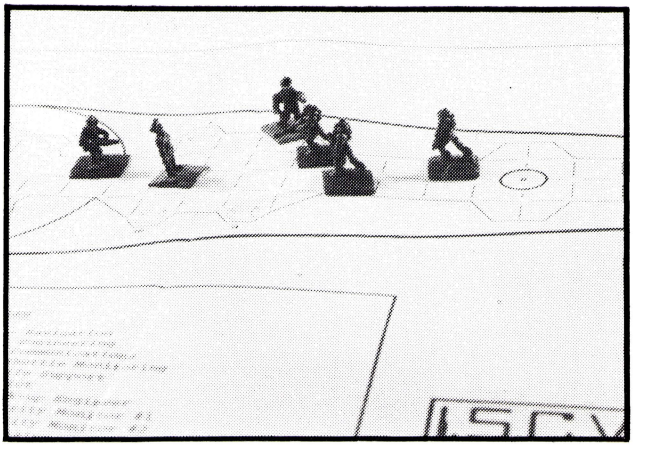
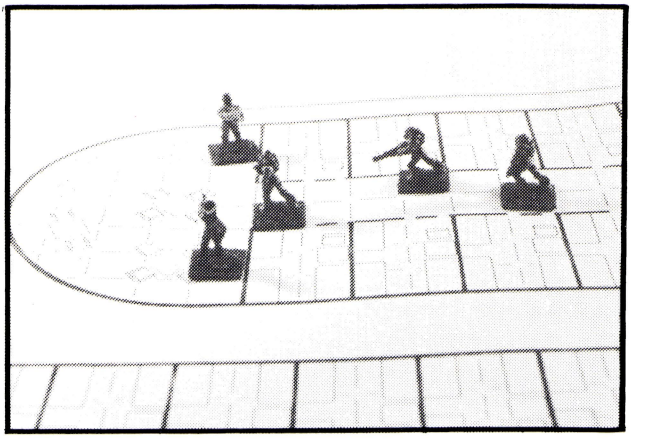


Figure 6.
Infantry advancing in company with a grav APC.

Figure 7.
Two adventurers on board the *King Richard* prepare to ambush what they believe to be two unarmed passengers.



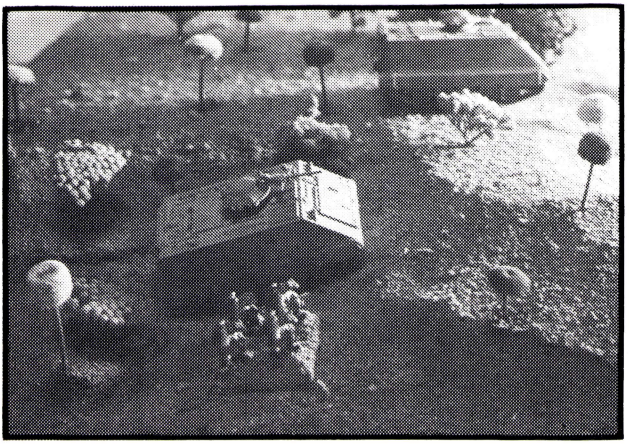


Figure 8.
Tech level 8 Newt infantry and their tracked APCs.

Figure 9.
Three adventurers encounter the security guard during a night break-in of the offices of Delgado Trading.

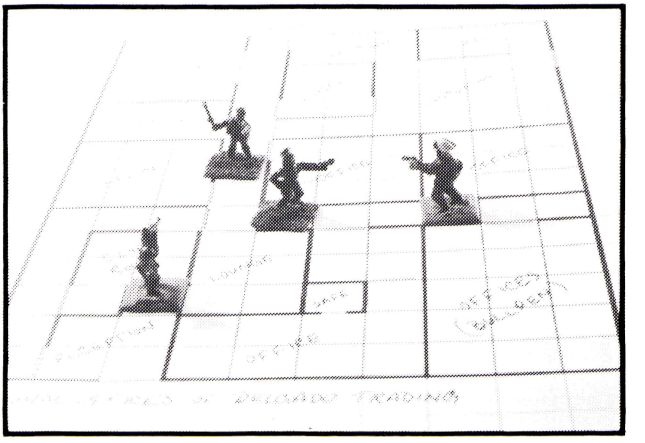


Figure 10.
Grav tank moving cross-country with fire-team mounted infantry.

ment). The referee can devote more attention to what is happening on a higher level, and not become bogged down in minutiae.

Miniatures add color and visual excitement to most adventure situations. A running firefight down a corridor is far more exciting when the players can actually see the bad guys gaining on them. Miniatures are good attention getters. A public demonstration session using gaming miniatures is one of the best ways to attract new members to a club.

There are a few disadvantages, however. Many players do not have the time and the patience necessary to prepare and paint miniatures. Those on strict budgets may find miniatures too expensive. Finally, not all adventures lend themselves well to miniatures treatment. Those situations in which combat is likely to occur, or are liable to be action-dominated, such as hijacking attempts, rescues, burglaries, and so on are suitable; most *Mercenary*-type actions are ideal.

Miniatures can be integrated into **Traveller** most easily by simply substituting them for the counters in *Snapshot* or *Azhanti High Lightning.* Expanding on this concept, miniatures can be used in combination with one of the above mentioned game rules and any suitable map (from the games, or from one of the many available from publishers of approved **Traveller** material). Progressing further along, very good looking deck plans (or building interiors, for that matter) can be made by anyone with a steady hand. Graph paper, a ruler, a drawing pen or two, and some patience are all that are needed to produce any interior a situation might demand (see figure 9). These home-grown plans can be colored in with various felt-tip markers (use the *Azhanti* color scheme, or make up one of your own). It is possible to recreate almost any conceiveable interior situation with gaming miniatures.

Exterior situations present minor problems of scale, but these can be solved with a little thought. The *Azhanti* system can be adapted directly to outside situations in certain limited circumstances. Basically, these are where the range is limited to less than 100 meters or so, (say in a courtyard of a manorhouse, or an area in and around a starship docking bay). Remember to use a scale of ½"=1.5 meters (for 25mm a scale of about 1"=1.5 meters) and to do the plans on a ½" grid for 15mm (1" grid for 25mm). If desired, furniture and other such features can be drawn directly on the paper (figures 4, 5, & 7).

The most spectacular means of using miniature figures is to construct actual scale terrain. Using various materials, gamers can build hills, valleys, trees, rivers, creeks, lakes, swamps, buildings, hedges, and so on, constructing a landscape in miniature over which the players maneuver their figures. This method can have great visual impact (figures 1, 3, 6, 8, & 10).

The drawbacks of using this system are the expense and effort required. The lack of squares to regulate movement and to aid in determining ranges will need to be gotten around by devising some simple variant rules (instead of being able to move 6 squares in a turn, a figure can move three inches, and so on).

It is possible to construct scale building and starship interiors for use with miniatures, but unless you are constructing a locale where many fights are to take place (such as the characters' free trader) it is recommended that paper floor plans be used for these situations.

So far, we have discussed only the use of gaming miniatures in the standard

Traveller ground encounter. In future articles, we will take up the subject of starship encounters, and actions involving mercenaries and other military and quasi-military units (using *Striker* miniatures rules).

An inexpensive way to find out if your group will benefit from using miniatures is to borrow a few from someone who already uses miniatures, and conduct a scenario or two using them. If no one near you uses miniatures, it is still possible to get started on an investment of less than $15. Buy a package or two (the number of miniatures in a package will vary, being anywhere from six to twelve figures), mount them on half-inch-square bases of thin cardboard or plastic, and try a scenario or two, with the figures unpainted, or painted only with a coat of spray paint. If your group finds them to their liking, buy a few more and some brushes and paints; then go to it. Usually, each player will wish to choose a figure that represents his or her own character, painting it personally. Most will be satisfied with a stock figure, while others will want to modify one to reflect their character's personality and equipment. Players can usually be persuaded to share in the cost of buying figures and in the work of painting them.

If miniatures don't apeal to you after all, you might be able to get rid of them by posting a notice at a local hobby shop or similar location where gamers gather. You may have to take a slight loss, but the risk is worth it. Most will find miniatures a valuable addition to their **Traveller** campaigns.

Photographs by Loren Wiseman. Terrain courtesy Frank Chadwick and Greg Novak. Vehicles and associated infantry figures from the collections of Frank Chadwick, Neil Lassiter, and Loren Wiseman. Other figures provided by Martian Metals, PO Box 778, Cedar Park, TX 78613 and Ral Partha, 5938 Carthage St, Cincinnati, OH 45212. King Richard starship deck plans courtesy FASA, Box 6930, Chicago, IL 60680.

—Loren K. Wiseman

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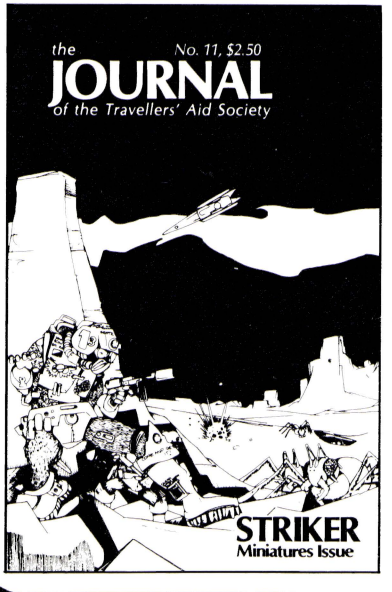

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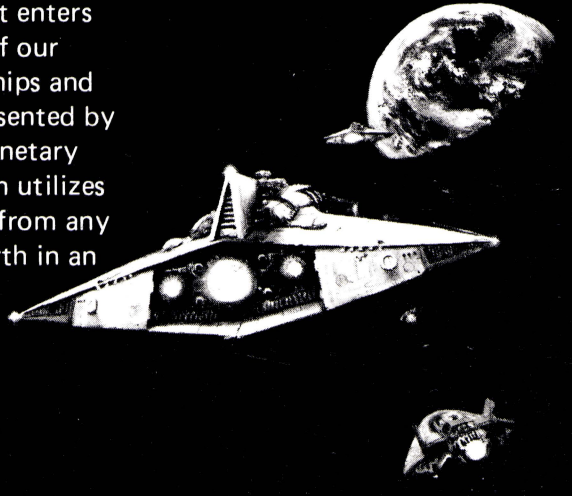

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